

The Signs of the Times, vol. 23

ESR

Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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1897

January 7, 1897

“Enforcing the Law of God” The Signs of the Times, 23, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

“For we know that the law is spiritual.” *Romans 7:14*. Then there can be no fulfilling of the law save in the Spirit. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.” Sometimes people talk about keeping the spirit of the law without the letter, but there is nothing in the Bible about keeping the spirit without the letter. By that expression men mean that they will keep what they think the law means, regardless of what it says. But God knows that the thoughts of man are vain. We are to forsake our own thoughts, as well as our own way. “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” *Isaiah 55:8, 9*. God is Spirit; therefore they that worship Him must do so in the Spirit which He supply. He provides the means, and does not ask us to worship Him in our spirit, or in our conception of His law. *SITI January 7, 1897, page 2.1*

We are not to worship God as we think Him to be, but as He is. And no one, as stated in the text just quoted, can comprehend God, or define the bounds and limits of His will. Then no man can lay down a rule for another, or even for himself. Here is the unlimited word. No man can put a limit on the word of God, or say of any text that he has fathomed its depth, and that he has all the truth there is in it. No; the word is spiritual, and no man can fathom the depth of the mind of the Holy Spirit. For this reason no man, and nobody of men, is at liberty to put any construction on the word of God, or to change it, or to hold or teach that it means anything different from exactly what it says. *SITI January 7, 1897, page 2.2*

The knowledge of this shuts out everything like religious coercion, persecution, or the laying down of rules for people to follow; for true

worship must be rendered in the Spirit which God alone gives. The word must be taken, not in our own spirit, but in the Spirit of God, and that must lead us into larger and larger ideas, and worked in us that which we do not know ourselves. Men have secret faults of which they are utterly unconscious. Not only so, but no man knows the depth of any sin which is brought to his attention, or the fullness of any command which is joined upon him. It is plain, therefore, that no man can measure his own righteousness, nor his own sin. He can simply know that he is a sinner, and that the righteousness of God is given to him. The more of the Lord he knows, the greater sinner he will realize himself to be. Therefore no man or body of men, whether in church or state, can lay down rules by which a man must live; because the field of God's requirements is as unbounded as His own life, and must therefore ever keep increasing to our vision; and though men filled the world with books in the attempt to define everything, there still would be something omitted. The Spirit of God must work its own life in every man. This takes the matter out of the realm of civil government entirely. No human authority whatever can impose the Spirit upon any man, or define the mind of the Spirit. The law of God, which is His righteousness, is the one thing which men are to seek. Christ said, "I know that His commandment is life everlasting." *John 12:50*. We also are to know the same thing. The law itself is spiritual; it is life everlasting. But life is not a figment, a fancy; it is real, and wherever there is life there must be something living. When we read the commandment is life everlasting, it does not mean that the written characters are life. They simply declare the fact. Everlasting life is in Jesus Christ. "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." *John 5:26*. He is the fountain of life. *Psalms 36:9; Jeremiah 2:13. SITI January 7, 1897, page 2.3*

The commandment or law of God is everlasting life because it is His own life. Then is the life of the Spirit of God; and putting the Spirit of God into the hearts of men puts the life of God there. It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, it gives freedom and peace with God. "The Spirit is life, because of righteousness;" and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." *Romans 8:1, 2, 9, 10*. Nothing less than the life of Christ is the law of God; and anything contrary to the life of Christ is condemned. Then we can leave the *right* of any body of men to enforce the law of God entirely outside

of the question. It is merely a question of *power*. Has it the power to enforce the law of God? Has any government on earth power to take the life of God and put it into the hearts of its subjects? Certainly not.*SITI January 7, 1897, page 2.4*

Then when men do make religious laws, and in force religion upon people, it is certain that they are not enforcing the religion of Christ. Therefore when they do that, those who are loyal to Christ can have no complicity with it whatever. It is paganism, no matter what form of truth there may be. It is but the former without the power or life. If such enforcement is put in the very terms of the Bible, it is only the more thoroughly pagan; for it is paganism trying to palm itself off as Christianity.*SITI January 7, 1897, page 2.5*

The attempt to enforce the ten commandments, even just as they read, would be the greatest dishonor men could offer to the Lord. It would be saying that the law of God is no better than any man may be of himself. It is the same as saying that a man is all right if he keeps the law so that no man can find fault with him. But the man he merely refrains from the outward violations of the law may be worse than the man who utterly disregard it, and knows he is guilty. In the latter case the man has nothing more in to trust, while in the other, the man is building himself up in his own righteousness, and things that he is all right as long as he keeps a letter so far as men can discern.*SITI January 7, 1897, page 2.6*

But the law is spiritual, and only the power of the Spirit can work righteousness in an individual. The recognition of civil government as having anything to do with the law of God, is directly opposed to the idea of justification by faith. To lay down a rule or law requiring obedience to the law of God, with a penalty for disobedience, is to say to a man, "You could keep it if you would try; but you will not try, and so we will compel you to do it." This is putting man on and equality with God. Anything less than the life of God is sin, and therefore for any power to attempt to enforce any of the precepts of Christ is simply an attempt to compel people to sin, and to hold them in sin.*SITI January 7, 1897, page 2.7*

January 14, 1897

“Letter and Spirit” The Signs of the Times, 23, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

“But now we are delivered from the law, being dead to that wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” *Romans 7:6*, margin. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.8*

What is the thing in which we were held, and to which we are now dead?—The seventh chapter of Romans is but an expansion of the sixth chapter, where we read that we are “dead to sin” (*verse 2*), and that “he that is dead is freed from sin” (*verse 7*). “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Verse 11*. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.9*

We are dead unto the sin which held us, because sin also is dead by Christ. “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” *Romans 6:6*. And so “we are delivered from the law.” It had been transgressed, and therefore it demanded our death; “for the wages of sin is death.” *Romans 6:23*. But now that we are dead, it pursues us no further; it has executed the penalty on us, in Christ. “The law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.” When he is dead, there is nothing more that it can do to him. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.10*

“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” *Galatians 2:20*. That is a good reason why the vengeance of the law no longer pursues us. The man who committed the sin is dead, and the man who now lives is a “new man,” walking “in newness of life.” The old life was a life of sin; the “new man” is after God “created in righteousness and true holiness.” *Ephesians 4:22-24*. Since “the new man has not transgressed the law, he is as a matter of course free. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.11*

But the law is not dead. It is as much alive as it ever was. The new man is free from it simply because he is walking in harmony with it. The new man is under as much obligation to keep the law as the old man was; the difference between them is that the new man does his duty, while the old man did not, and could not. The old man was “not subject to the law of God,” being opposed to the Holy Spirit. The new man is alive through Christ, who died “that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” *Romans 8:4.SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.12*

“If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” *Galatians 5:18.* But the verse last quoted tells us that “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled” in those who walk after the Spirit. Therefore we are taught most plainly that the only ones who are “not under the law” are those in whom the righteousness of the law is fulfilled. The transgressors of the law are the only ones who are “under the law.” Those who are “delivered from the law” are the ones who are keeping it “in spirit and in truth.” *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.13*

This is shown in the statement that we are delivered from the law, in order “that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” We still serve, but as free men, and not as slaves. It is a spiritual service, that is, a real service; for only that which is spiritual is real. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.14*

“For we know that the law is spiritual.” *Romans 7:14.* It follows, therefore, that when we were serving in oldness of the letter, we were not really keeping the law; for since the law is spiritual, it necessarily requires spiritual service. So it is only when we are delivered from the law that we keep it. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.15*

Unlike Human Law

The common opinion in regard to the letter and the spirit of the law, is most erroneous. The error arises from supposing that the law of God is similar to human laws. It is quite common to speak of the *spirit* of a law made by man, when all that is meant is the *intent* of the law. Thus: No human law is perfect; its framers can not possibly

foresee all the circumstances that may arise to be judged by it. Then, too, the language of the law may be obscure. So the judge often finds it necessary to decide what was the intent of the lawmakers. A man might be technically or literally a violator of a law, while still acting fully in harmony with the intent of its framers. This is what is meant by the mistaken use of the term “letter and spirit,” as applied to human laws. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.16*

Now the great difference between the nature of human laws and the divine law is that there is no spirit to the former, while the latter is wholly spiritual. Spirit is life; but there is no life in human laws. They can not give life. No man can get anything more out of a human law than he puts into it. If men ignore any human law, then it is said to be “a dead letter.” But it has no more life in itself when it is obeyed than when it is disregarded; the life is in the people, who make their acts conform to the words of the law. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.17*

The law of God is wholly different. It is alive whether people regard it or not. It is alive because it is spiritual. The man who serves in “the oldness of the letter” does not really serve at all, because, no matter how good his purpose, or how strong his endeavors, to keep the law, he is simply reproducing himself, and not the law. In trying to do what the law tells him to do, he is merely doing what his own nature allows him to do. While in a carnal state, he is “not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” *Romans 8:7. SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.18*

“The Law Is Life”

But “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (*Romans 8:2*) gives freedom from this bondage, so that “the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us.” The real law is the life of God in Christ, and that gives life. What is termed “the letter” of the law of God is the verbal statement of the law. This is not the law itself, but only the *form* of it, as the apostle said the Jews had “the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.” *Romans 2:20*. The verbal statement of the law bears the same relation to the law itself that the photograph of a man has to the man himself. It is but the shadow. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.19*

A shadow is the exact image of the substance. The words of the divine law, being “the *form* of knowledge and of the truth,” might be compared to a statue, rather than to a photograph. It has the form and features, and differs from the reality only in having no life. So when we speak of the spirit of God’s law, we mean the law itself, and not merely the intent of the law. The intent of the law may be learned from the words, since God is not subject to human limitations, but knows what is needed, and can say just what he means.*SITI January 14, 1897, page 2.20*

From the words of the law of God we may know exactly what we should do, for it is a perfect form. But it is only in Christ that we find the living substance. The law in Christ is not only living, but it gives life. It performs itself in those who submit to it, because it is God’s own life. It is not less than the letter; it is not something different from the letter; but it is simply the living thing which the letter perfectly describes. E. J. W.*SITI January 14, 1897, page 3.1*

“Whom Shall We Hear?” The Signs of the Times, 23, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall life.” *John 5:24, 25.SITI January 14, 1897, page 3.2*

The voice which we are to hear is always the voice of the Son of God. Only that voice will give life; only they that hear that voice shall live. If man speaks, he is to be but the mouthpiece; the voice is to be God’s. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” *1 Peter 4:11.* If any one speaks with his own voice, him we are not to hear.*SITI January 14, 1897, page 3.3*

Some of the Samaritans believed on Christ because of what was told them by the woman whom Christ met at the well. But “many more believed because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him

ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.” Their faith rested on the true foundation,—Christ’s word. No belief that does not rest on this will be enduring. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 3.4*

When many of Christ’s disciples turned from him because they could not receive his sayings, and Jesus had asked the twelve if they also would go away, Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” There was none other than Christ who had the words of eternal life; there is none other now. And those who hear his words, believe and *are sure* that he is the Son of God. They have a knowledge that is possessed by none others. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 3.5*

Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” *John 10:27*. When the true Shepherd “putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.” *Verses 4, 5*. The true Shepherd “calleth his own sheep by name.” This is how they know his voice. He speaks directly to them, to each one individually, and they know it. This is how we know the voice of the Son of God. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 3.6*

And for that voice, and that only, we are to listen. Many voices are crying, many saying, “Lo here!” and “Lo there!” but the Shepherd’s voice is different from them all. That is the voice of One whom, when we hear it, we know to be acquainted with us,—with our past lives, and the motives and thoughts and perplexities of our individual hearts. He knows us by name; and if we will hear his voice, he will make known unto us his name. And “his name, through faith in his name,” shall make us whole, as it did the cripple at the beautiful gate of the temple. *Acts 3:16*. E. J. W. *SITI January 14, 1897, page 3.7*

January 21, 1897

“Power and Freedom” The Signs of the Times, 23, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

Power belongs to the Lord alone. It is not safe to trust men with power. When men have power and use it they always become tyrants. The Lord has all power, and in the thought of that is the most wonderful revelation of love, and kindness, and long-suffering, and freedom.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.1*

With absolutely all power, with the hearts of men in his hands, the Creator of men, living in the flesh and giving his life to us, so that we live upon his life, has never exercised his power over against our wills. Such is the Lord. Then no one who knows the Lord, and who yields to him and his power, will have anything of arbitrariness; there will be nothing savoring of force or compulsion in him. No man who knows the power of God, which is love, will try to compel others to agree with him; and of course no body of men who know the Lord will do so.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.2*

It is the Lord's power that is to work in men. That power we see in all the visible creation. There is a mighty power there, as vegetation; but no arbitrariness. That power will work its way out wherever there is an opening; but it works in quietness. That power has dwelt in us, yet never has been exercised against our will. Can we conceive of any freedom greater than that? It is the freedom the Lord has guaranteed to men, and he himself will maintain it.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.3*

The very fact that the Lord has never compelled us to do anything, should show us that his will is not something against man. The Lord has revealed his will to us that we may choose it. His will is life and righteousness. When we choose that his will shall be done in us, then he will do it; for he has all power to work it. He “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” And when we give him the privilege, yielding our way to his way, our judgment to his judgment, although he works in us, yet we are still free.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.4*

This is religious liberty, the liberty that is to be proclaimed to men. There are many who profess to know the Lord, who are zealous and sincere, who yet do not know the Lord, because they think he is pleased to have them dictate as to how people shall serve him. The only way this can be counteracted, as far as it ever will be, is to proclaim the Lord, and the freedom of the Lord, to everybody.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.5*

Those only can proclaim the freedom of the Lord, who knows it. when we recognize the fact that the Lord has been with us all the years, and yet waiting, having all power, and yet refusing to use one particle of it against our will, we shall know what it is that the Lord wants to be proclaimed to men. And this message will be proclaimed in love, for that is the power of the Lord.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.6*

It is his power alone that is to be manifested. We stand where Christ stood: "I can of mine own self do nothing." We can say: "His power is dwelling in me, because I am willing it shall. I am zealous of good works. I know his power is sufficient to work them. It have tried to manufacture them, and could not; now I yield to him, that he may work in me that which is good through Christ Jesus."*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.7*

Then it is his power working in us mightily, and that power will work only that which is persuasive and gentle. There will be no compulsion of others, and the man who knows the Lord will always be a free man. "With freedom hath the Lord made us free." The Gospel proclaims liberty to the captive; let us exercise it, and enjoy it. E. J. W.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 33.8*

"The Greatness of His Gentleness" The Signs of the Times, 23, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

In the words of Hosea of the Lord says, "I will be as the dew unto Israel." The figure conveys the idea of gentleness, refreshing, and strength. Fresh every evening, the dew what's the fields, and gives the real fighting and strength which vegetation needs for the growth it must make with each day's sun.*SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.1*

Thus it is with grace, and the mercies of the Lord. “They are new every morning.” There must be daily growth, and every day we must have the refreshing and reviving from the Lord. He reveals Himself to the bleeding heart as gently and noiselessly as the dew distills upon the blade of grass; but there is strength in His mercies, that fortifies the soul in distress of sin, and in the heat, “when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.” *SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.2*

There is so much lost to many because they’re not content to rest daily and the Lord, and drinking and of His quiet presence. When Job, in his time of affliction, spoke of the days of his strength, when he was eyes to the blind, and feet to blame, and the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, he said: “My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch. My glory was fresh in me.” *Chapter 29:19, 20*. The message to every believer is, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” This glory seen upon the Christian, as fresh and glistening as a dew-bespangled meadow in the morning sun, is the testimony of the Christian life. *SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.3*

The Lord often uses the figure of the dew and the rain to describe the nature of His word,—the word by which we are born again, and grow, and are sanctified. He says by Moses: “My doctrine shall drop is the rain, My speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass.” *Deuteronomy 32:2*. “For as the rain cometh down... so shall My word be.” *Isaiah 55:10, 11. SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.4*

It is a divinely appropriate simile. Faraday showed that there is stored in a dew drop sufficient electric force to rend a rock. Each drop of dew or rain is bringing life and power into vegetation; and thus the force that would shatter the rock, if pent up, is working itself out in perishing delicate tissues, and caring the water of life to all animate creation. *SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.5*

So it is God’s word. “No word from God shall be void of power,” said the angel to marry; and the Lord says, “Is not My word... like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” The power of the word is

the almighty power of God. And there is in it the same combination of power and gentleness, carried to an infinite degree. All the power is for the faint and the weary, and the word comes as a still small voice to the soul. In the heart of the believer it becomes a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. It is everlasting strength, and everlasting consolation. *SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.6*

This mingling of gentleness and strength that is in the word, reproduces itself in those who take the word in its fullness. "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." *Hosea 14:5*. The glory of the Lord is risen upon the believer, and he will reflect the beauty and the grace of Jesus' character. In His meekness and humility, and Divine beauty of soul, He was "the Lily of the valley;" and to those who take Him He brings the same life that He lived. They are made partakers of the Divine nature. *SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.7*

Then there is the infinite strength of His character, which He also shares with those who are His. The life, for beauty, it is as the lily, but for the strength, it casts forth its roots as the cedars of Lebanon. It is rooted and grounded in love, rooted and built up in Him. The firmness and constancy of the character that is rooted in the word cannot be shaken though all the world is removed. It is a rare combination, this blending of consummate gentleness and grace with unflinching firmness and unyielding strength. It can only come as the gift of God. *SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.8*

The Lord works this in the believer; for it is His own way of dealing with His children. His Providences may appear otherwise to the natural heart and eyes, but in the end every soul that is subdued wholly to God will recognize His infinite tenderness in all His ways. David was a rough and stirring school of instruction, but in the end he was able to say, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." *SITI January 21, 1897, page 35.9*

January 28, 1897

“The Nature of God’s Commandment” The Signs of the Times, 23, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, can not love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from him. That he who loveth God love his brother also.” *1 John 4:20, 21, R.V.* A little consideration of the commandments God. Let us first ask a few questions about it. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.1*

Does the text teach that whoever loves God is thereby laid under obligations to love his brother also? that if a man loves God and does not love his brother also, he will be punished for violation of law? Manifestly not, from the very statement of the text, that a man can not love God without loving his brother. “He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen.” Since a man can not love God if he does not also have love for his brother, or neighbor, it is evident that the text does not mean that there is a special law enacted for those who love God, requiring them to love their brethren. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.2*

Love comes from God. “Every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” Therefore whoever loves God must of necessity love his brother also. He must love all men, for God’s love is without respect of persons. And this shows that men can not, as is now quite commonly thought, learn to love God by first loving their fellow-men. Love to God is first. Jesus said: “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” *Mark 12:29-31. SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.3*

No man can love his neighbor unless he loves God, because love is of God; and nobody can love God without loving his brother. Love is

one. It can not be forced, for the use of force is sure death to love. It must flow spontaneously. Yet we have the statement, "This commandment have we from him. That he who loveth God love his brother also." The thing therefore that we are to learn from this is that the commandment of God is something far different from the commandments of men. Human laws are wholly a matter of force; but God's commandment is that we should love one another, and that can not be a matter of force. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.4*

The law of God is love. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." *1 John 5:3*. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." *Galatians 5:14*. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." *Romans 13:8, 10*. When God spoke his law, it was because "he loved the people." *Deuteronomy 33:2, 3*. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.5*

It is clear from these scriptures that the law of God is love, even the love of God. But God himself is love. He does not merely have love, but love is the very life of God. Therefore the law of God is his life. And this brings us to the words of Jesus: "For I spake not from myself; but the Father which sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life eternal." *John 12:49, 50, R.V.* The commandment of God is life eternal, and to know God is life eternal (*John 17:3*), showing that the commandment of God is his own life. We know one only as we know his life. So we know God only by knowing his life, and his life is eternal life; but his commandment is life eternal, because his commandment is his life. In other words, the life of God is the law for man. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.6*

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." *John 1:18*. God set forth his Son, in whom was his own life, in order that we might know what the law is. In Christ we have the real, living law. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.7*

We read that out of the heart are the issues of life. Now Christ said of himself, "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." *Psalms 40:7, 8*. Therefore the life which issued from Christ was the law of God; and as he lived by the Father (*John 6:57*), we see again that the law of God is his life. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.8*

In Christ "all fullness" dwells, even "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The apostle Paul wrote thus of his prayer: "I bow knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." *Ephesians 3:14-19*. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.9*

This is an inspired prayer, and therefore we know that it is the will of God that its requests should be granted. If we but allow Christ to dwell in our hearts, he will bring in all his own fullness which is all the fullness of God. Then from our hearts will issue the same life that issued from the heart of Christ on earth, even the life of God. And so we shall find that this commandment is not grievous, because it is not an arbitrary requirement laid on us, but our very life. It is not something which we are to do by our own strength, but which, if we allow it, will work itself out in us. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.10*

How will this life be manifested in us? Just as it was in Christ when he was on earth; for he is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. When tempted to idolatry, he replied, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." *Matthew 4:10*. Therefore the one in whom is the life of Christ, can not be an idolater. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.11*

When the parents of Jesus found him in the temple, asking and answering the questions of the doctors, he was not impatient of

control, although he was so wonderfully wise, far exceeding them in respect; but “he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.” *Luke 2:51*. Therefore the one in whom is the real law of God, in the form of the life of Christ, will honor his father and his mother, as required by the fifth commandment; and he will not find it burdensome to do so. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 50.12*

Jesus said, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” *John 18:37*. He “did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” *1 Peter 2:22*. Therefore those in whom he dwells will not only tell the truth, but they will love the truth. They will love the truth so much that they will never seek to parry its force, nor to evade any portion of the truth of God’s word. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.1*

The tenth commandment says, “Thou shalt not covet.” So far was Christ from coveting, that he freely gave up everything that was his own. And so those in whom he dwells will not find it a grievous matter to be content with such things as they have. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.2*

Christ kept the Sabbath, even the seventh day of the week, and no other. His life was God’s life, and the life of God is the law for men; therefore those who live solely by him will also keep the Sabbath day. They will not consider this a burdensome thing, but will delight in it, even as Christ delighted to do the will of God. Those who delight in the Sabbath, also delight themselves in the Lord (*Isaiah 38:13, 14*), thus showing again that the law of God, including the fourth commandment, is the life of God. To delight in the law is to delight in the life of the Lord. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.3*

Let us therefore say to Christ as he stands at the door and knocks, “Come in, thou that comest in the name of the Lord.” Let him come in with all the divine fullness, to live in us his own blessed will. It will be different from anything that we have ever before done, “for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” *Isaiah 55:8, 9*. The desire of man is to rise, and here is

elevation indeed. The life of God will lift the one who accepts it from earth to heaven. E. J. W. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.4*

“Argument” The Signs of the Times, 23, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

If the Gospel could be propagated by argument, it would be vastly more popular than it now is. If men could be saved by argument and controversy, there would be thousands saved today where there are only tens. But the fact is that it is not argument that is needed, but “holding forth the word of life.” A man always weakens his cause when he consents to debate and strive and argue about it. Strife and debate are so firmly imbedded in human nature that it takes us a long time to learn this. But if we were to stop and think we should see that it is true. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.5*

Men do not argue about that of which they are perfectly sure. You would not argue with a man to prove to him that the sun is shining at noon. You point out the fact to him, and if he wishes to see it for himself, he can, and if he does not, you can not help him by argument. You would not debate with a man to convince him that the twenty-six letters of the alphabet are what they are. If he does not know them, you may teach him, but not by a debate. If he does not wish to have you teach him, but wishes to argue the point, you would simply leave him to himself. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.6*

And you would not be at all moved by his boast that you dared not debate with him, and that your refusal showed that you did not dare put your belief to the test of argument. You do not simply *believe*, but you *know*, and it is much better to put knowledge to the test of actual use than to the test of argument. To argue the case would indicate a doubt about it in your own mind. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.7*

Now what the Gospel wants is not men who are ready to debate, but who know Christ, and who know his word. Such men will teach by their quiet lives, and if any want to learn further, they will be ready to point them to the Word, but they will not lower the standard by arguing with those who do not want to learn. *SITI January 28,*

The man who wants to learn never wants to argue. The man who is anxious to argue a debate, does not want to learn anything from the one with whom he argues, but he wants, by arguing, to fortify himself in the opinions that he already holds. By repeating his arguments he helps to convince himself that they are true; and if he can outtalk his opponent, that proves to him that he is right. Therefore the time spent on him while he is in that condition is wasted. The Christian can afford to let him talk and even rail, knowing that the truth can not be injured. This very confidence begets in the other a desire to know what it is that is so sure that you are not in the least afraid that it will be overthrown by argument. Then is your time to instruct him. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.9*

So, then, argumentative ability is not necessarily a part of the outfit of the servant of Christ. For "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to *teach* [not to argue], patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to acknowledging of the truth." 2 Timothy 2:24, 25. E. J. W. *SITI January 28, 1897, page 51.10*

February 4, 1897

“The New Creation” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” “In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.” At the close of each day’s work “God saw that it was good;” and at the close of the sixth day, when everything was finished, “God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” *Genesis 1:31*. Man himself was perfect, and all was as good as God himself could make it. *SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.1*

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” *Genesis 2:1-3*. *SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.2*

“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” *Exodus 20:11*. *SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.3*

The Sabbath was the sign of the power of God’s word. He had spoken all things into existence; and now he rested in perfect confidence that his word would uphold that which he had created. The Sabbath of the Lord-God’s rest-is therefore the mark of a perfect, new creation. *SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.4*

But man, to whom the dominion of the earth had been given, sinned. He sold himself to the enemy of God, and received death as his reward. By his sin the curse came upon the earth, so that God’s perfect, new creation was everywhere marred. But God was not defeated; his purposes can not be thwarted, for he “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” Therefore his love devised means to insure the carrying out of his original plan. *SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.5*

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” *John 3:16*. Christ was given to death, that man might receive the eternal life which had been lost through sin.*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.6*

But the cross of Christ is “the power of God.” *1 Corinthians 1:18*. The Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” *Romans 1:16*. But ever since the creation of this world, the eternal power of God has been manifested in the things that he has made. *Romans 1:20*. Therefore the cross of Christ-the Gospel-is the same power that is seen in creation. The same power of God by which man was created in the beginning, is now manifested through the Gospel to re-create him-to bring him back to the perfection which he had at first.*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.7*

This is shown very clearly in the Scriptures. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,” or, as the Revision has it, “there is a new creation.” *2 Corinthians 5:17*. Of course there can not be a new creature without there having been a new creation. So again, “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared that we should walk in them.” *Ephesians 2:10*, margin.*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.8*

This new creation is signalized by rest. Christ says, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” *Matthew 11:28*. Whoever comes to him is recreated and made new, —and then he finds rest-restoration of God.*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.9*

As the new creation is the same as that wrought in the beginning, and by the same means, the word of God, so it has the same mark, namely, the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day. Notice these points:—*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.10*

1. In Christ there is a new creation. In him all things are created in heaven and in earth. *Colossians 1:16*.*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.11*

2. With the new creation in Christ, there comes rest. Even so it was in the beginning.*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.12*

3. Christ is of God made unto us “wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” *1 Corinthians 1:30*. He is the truth, and he sanctifies himself, that we may be sanctified through the truth. *John 17:19.SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.13*

4. The Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day, on which Christ rested when he had finished the new creation in the beginning, is the sign of sanctification, which comes only through Christ. We read, “Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” *Ezekiel 20:12.SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.14*

So now, as at the first, the Sabbath is the sign of the perfect, new creation. God has not changed, his power has not changed, neither has his sign changed.*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.15*

But this is not the end. In the beginning God had a perfect earth as the abode of perfect men. So again he will have a perfect abode for the men who are made complete in Christ,—a new earth for his new men. He says, “Behold, I make all things new.” And again, “He that overcometh shall inherit all things.” *Revelation 21:5, 7*. “We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” *2 Peter 3:13.SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.16*

There will be the same new creation that was in the beginning, at the close of the first six days; for it will be “the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” *Acts 3:21*. And since it is the same new creation, the same thing, namely, the Sabbath, will mark it; for we read God’s sure Word to the new men whom he has created in Christ:—*SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.17*

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.” *Isaiah 66:22, 23.SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.18*

If we would be part of God’s new creation, we must have it in God’s

own way, and not refuse to allow God to place his own seal of perfection upon it. E. J. W. *SITI February 4, 1897, page 66.19*

February 25, 1897

“The Will of God” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

Some people never think of the will of God except when some disaster comes. Somebody dies, and they say that is the will of God, and we must bow to it. They attribute only that which is terrible or sorrowful to the will of the Lord. When anything comes that we can rejoice in, they seem to think that that is something that slipped in when the Lord was not watching. That is heathenism. Molech, the god of the heathen, was made to represent the idea of God always watching in anger over the people, and they offered their children as sacrifices to appease his anger. The Lord is good. His tender mercy is over all his works. He sends joy and peace; and even the sorrow which come as the result of the curse and sin, he turns to our good, and those who love him will get good in them. “All things work together for good to them that love God.” *SITI February 25, 1897, page 113.1*

We like to do everything we can for our children. We like to have them enjoy themselves. Sometimes they ask something that we know is not best, and we have to deny them. Suppose they should go away grumbling, and say that we never tried to do anything for them. “It is his will; and I suppose we must yield to it.” They know better. They know that we plan enjoyments for them, and desire their happiness; and when something comes up that is contrary to their minds, they feel it is all right. They thought it was the best thing, but they have confidence in our judgment, and so give it up. In that way they get the good out of that very thing that is denied them. *SITI February 25, 1897, page 113.2*

Sometimes things may look very dubious. The way seems dark, and there are troubles and difficulties on every side. Now shall we groan over it and mourn and get all the hardness out of it? Some people seem to think that we must be duly solemn and mournful about a trial, because the Lord wants to make us miserable, and we must make it as hard as possible. No; there is good in it, and we get the good if we believe what the Lord says. We may not be able to

see how there can be good in it; but he is the one who is to make it work for good. We do not have to make it work for good, and so we need not worry if we can not see how it will be done. We can not understand how the Lord will turn a temptation of the evil into strength for us. If he should tell us how he does it, we could not do it nor comprehend it. As it is his power alone that does it, we need not be troubled about how it is done.*SITI February 25, 1897, page 113.3*

What a blessed thing it would be if men could recognize the will of God in prosperity, as well as in the adversity that they suffer! It is the will of God that men should be saved. Why do not men submit to that? If they should, they would find more pleasure in God's will.*SITI February 25, 1897, page 113.4*

It is the will of God that we should be delivered from this present evil world. *Galatians 1:4*. It is the "good-pleasure of his will" that he has made us accepted in the Beloved. It is the will of God that Christ should save us, and raise us up at the last day. *John 6:39*. Paul expected "a prosperous journey by the will of God," to visit the church at Rome. And he had it too, although he was shipwrecked on the way; for he knew that "all things works together for good to them that love God." *Romans 8:28*.*SITI February 25, 1897, page 113.5*

If people who talk so solemnly about submitting to the will of God, whenever some affliction occurs, would talk also about submitting to his will in the sunshine, the showers, the air, the food, the flowers, and the fruits of the earth, they would soon learn that God is not always trying to make it unpleasant for his children; and they would soon be able to say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." E. J. W.*SITI February 25, 1897, page 113.6*

March 4, 1897

“The True Israel” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” *Romans 9:6, 7. SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.1*

These words of the apostle Paul should be sufficient to clear up all mystery in the minds of Bible believers concerning who are the “Israel” of to-day. It is plain that all theories and all claims based upon literal descent from Abraham are of no value. It is of no consequence to us to know who are the natural seed of Abraham to-day, or what is to become of them in the future. No promise of God made to Israel was fulfilled through the simple process of natural descent. *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.2*

The line of descent from Abraham which God recognizes is not a natural line, but a spiritual one. He has never recognized any line but the spiritual one, even from the days of Abraham himself. Of this fact there are many proofs. When Ishmael was born, and Abraham desired that he might live before God as the heir of the promise (*Genesis 17:18*), the Lord said to him, “Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.” And when, after the birth of Isaac, Sarah desired the son of Abraham by the bondwoman to be cast out because of his mocking, the Lord said to Abraham, “In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.3*

Ishmael was the father of a great nation; and we read the Abraham had other sons beside Ishmael and Isaac; but to these he gave gifts and sent them away, and Isaac alone was his heir. So there were several sons of Abraham, but only one heir; multitudes of natural descendants, but only a certain line of them whom God recognized as his children. *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.4*

Isaac was chosen as the heir because he was the child of promise. The Scripture commentary upon this is, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." So then the line of descent was reckoned from God himself. Between God and the carnal nature there could be no possible union, and therefore no child of the flesh could be a son of God. Isaac was the child of promise; that is, he was born *through faith* in the promise of God made to Abraham, and thus he became a son. No person was ever a son of God who did not become so by faith. It has been possible for all the fallen sons of Adam to become sons of God by believing, as Abraham did, on "Him that justifieth the ungodly." By so doing they are "born again" into the line of the true descendants of Abraham,—into the family of God. And the same privilege is open to every man to-day. *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.5*

The distinguishing mark of this line of descent from Abraham is righteousness; and his descendants compose together a "righteous nation,"—the only righteous nation this earth has ever known. Of them it will be said in the final day of reckoning, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." *Isaiah 26:2*. This righteousness is by faith; for we read that "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;" and also, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." *Romans 4:3, 5*. And thus, as the apostle states in another place, "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." And the same are also the sons of God; for "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." *John 1:12, 13*. *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.6*

Faith, and faith alone, stands out through all the history of Israel as the means by which the heirship of the promises of God was received. Abraham had faith in God, and God gave him the covenant of circumcision, "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe." *Romans 4:11*. But when the Israelites signally failed in faith, at Kadesh-barnea, and were turned back

from the land of promise to wander in the wilderness, circumcision ceased among them, and was not renewed until, under the command of Joshua, they again stood on the borders of Canaan. Tho they were the *literal* descendants of Abraham, and of Isaac, the child of promise, the Lord refused to recognize them as the children of Abraham, because of their unbelief. *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.7*

John the Baptist, also, and the Saviour, plainly told the Pharisees that they were not the children of Abraham. Said John, "Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." *Matthew 3:9*. Thus he declared that natural descent from Abraham counted for nothing. And the Saviour said of them, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham," and also, "Ye are of your father the devil." They had not been born of God, and therefore were neither the children of God nor the children of Abraham. *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.8*

As the natural seed of Abraham were not counted as children without faith, so, on the other hand, those who were not the *natural* seed could become united to Israel by faith. Any stranger could come and join himself to them and be counted as one of them. The promises of God were as specifically made to the stranger who came and united with Israel, as to the natural descendants themselves. God did not separate the Israelites from the other nations for the purpose of going off by himself with a certain people to favor them, and shutting the others out. He separated them from the wickedness of the nations around them, that they might not be contaminated thereby; but he excluded no one from joining them and sharing with them in all their blessings. He designed to magnify his name in them before all the world, that men might be drawn to them with a desire to obtain knowledge of him. *SITI March 4, 1897, page 130.9*

There is an Israel of God to-day, as there ever has been; and now, as then, it is open to all persons of whatever race or ancestry to unite themselves to it. There is nothing exclusive about it; it is as free as the offer of salvation. The condition of union with Israel now is the same that is ever was,—belief in God. "They which are of

faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” The same promises of God to ancient Israel hold good to-day; the advantages of union with Israel are the same. But there is no promise to the merely natural descendants, and no advantage in being connected with Abraham, Isaac or Jacob through the flesh. The Israel of God is to-day the remnant of the “righteous nation,” that have gathered out in all ages from every race, and kindred and tongue, by the power of God’s grace, through faith. “Israel” stands for those who by faith have power, as Jacob did, with God, and prevail. All these are children of God; and only these has God recognized in past time as Abraham’s children, or does recognize as such to-day. They are those whom Christ has redeemed. “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” E. J. W.*SITI*
March 4, 1897, page 130.10

March 11, 1897

“Heresy and Heretics” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

The word “heretic” occurs but once in the Bible; the word “heresy” occurs four times, once in the singular, and three times in the plural. The full meaning of the word “heresy” is very concisely put by Mr. Gladstone, in his article on “The Place of Heresy and Schism in the Modern Christian Church,” in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*. He says of heresy, “It means self-chosen and self-formed opinion. The Gospel is not chosen or formed by us: but fashioned by God, and tendered for our acceptance.” *SITI March 11, 1897, page 2.1*

That is the whole case in a nut-shell. God is the only Source of truth. Only those are heretics who will not accept the word of God. He who accepts God’s will as final is not an heretic, although he may be alone in his belief. Since God, and not the church, is the standard authority, and the source of truth, a man is not necessarily an heretic because he is not in harmony with what is called “the church.” As a general thing it is the majority of “the church” who are “heretics,” that is, choosers of their ways rather than of God’s, while those who cling closely to the word of God are the few. *SITI March 11, 1897, page 2.2*

God is no respecter of persons; all are alike before Him. Therefore one man has as much right to choose for himself as any other, or as all other men. Therefore heresy is not a term that can properly be applied to a man because of any relation that he sustains to “the church.” Heresy can exist only in relation to God. *SITI March 11, 1897, page 2.3*

This fact was recognized by the Apostle Paul when he was accused before Felix. He did not admit that he was an heretic, but said, “After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers,” and then showed that he was not an heretic, by adding, “believing all things which are written in law and in the prophets.” *Acts 24:14. SITI March 11, 1897, page 2.4*

As no one on earth has the power to define and set the limits of the truth of God, no one has the authority to declare any other one an heretic. Men have no right to go beyond the inspired instruction, "Preach the word." If the church of Christ does this, it may leave the responsibility of choosing for themselves or allowing God to choose for them, to those who hear; and to God may be left the responsibility of deciding who has chosen well. *SITI March 11, 1897, page 3.1*

March 18, 1897

“The Turkish-Armenian Question” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

A Consideration of Some Neglected Truths

For a long time, especially for the last eighteen months, the attention of the whole civilized world has been directed to the events taking place in Turkey. The Armenian massacres have been discussed in doubtless every pulpit in Christendom, and the papers, both secular and religious, have overflowed with accounts, comments, and suggestions. Indeed, one expects to see in his daily paper a column devoted to the situation in Turkey or to the relation of the Powers to it, just as regularly as to the state of the market. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.1*

It is therefore not necessary in this place to devote any space to the detailing of the outbreaks and massacres. No neglect has been shown in keeping them before the public in all their awful enormity; no details have been omitted, that would tend to excite the horror of the reader or hearer. While we do not repeat the reports of these massacres, we shall, for the purpose of our present study, assume that they are all true, both as to the numbers of Armenians slain, and as to the cruelties perpetrated. It might be well, however, to remember that in these reports we have the testimony from only one side,—that of the Armenians and those who are prejudiced against the Turks,—yet we will not now stop to question their truthfulness; let each one think that the outrages are as fearful as his imagination has pictured them. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.2*

A Still More Terrible Thing

The taking of human life under any circumstances is an awful thing. To read of men being shot and stabbed, of human bodies mangled and bleeding in the streets, or kicked to one side as though they were dogs, is horrible; yet no description can equal the reality. So we say that people do well to shudder as they read of wholesale

slaughter. But fearful as the massacres in Turkey may have been, there is something to which we do not see anybody's attention specially called, which is still more shocking, so much more shocking that there can be no comparison. What is that thing?—it is *the almost universal cry for vengeance*, the demand for war,—for more killing,—that has issued and is still issuing from the lips and pens of professed followers and ministers of Christ. We do not wish to call attention to any individual, but only to the thing, and therefore we shall not give the names of those whose utterances we quote.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.3*

One man, who shows his strong religious sentiments by the statement, “We want a leader filled with the Holy Ghost, whose only fear is to displease God,” writes thus to a leading religious journal:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.4*

Sir, I am the father of a family, but my sons and I are only waiting the call to go out. In God's name let us raise an army of volunteers, and wipe out the awful stain upon our fair island home of accomplices in crime, and *sweep the old murderer and all his tribe into the sea.**SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.5*

Another person, a woman, a regular correspondent of the same religious paper, quotes the story of two English captains who received some Armenian refugees on board their ships in the Bosphorus, and then when the Turks demanded the refugees, hoisted the British flag, upon which the Turks went away. Then she says:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.6*

How fervently one wishes for a moment that they had fired upon our flag! It would have been the signal for instant war!*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.7*

Gross Perversion of the Gospel

We have before us a report of a great representative meeting of Wesleyan Methodists, that was held in the historic City Road Chapel a few weeks ago. The writer says that, it was a meeting that showed, above all things, in how large a degree the best conscience of the people is permeated with the idea that the ethical

principles of the Sermon on the Mount are applicable in all their simplicity even to the complex problems of international relations, and then follow these words:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.8*

The immediate outcome was a resolution assuring Her Majesty's Government of united and vigorous support in any steps it may take to bring to a speedy end these disgraceful and unparalleled atrocities.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.9*

That by this resolution was meant support even in the event of war, is clearly shown by what preceded. One speaker said that "if necessary, England must stand alone in order to bring to an end this chapter of Eastern misrule." This, as another truly said, would doubtless "provoke a European war," yet even this the reverend gentlemen assembled were ready to accept, for still another said, "With Russia or without her, with the Concert of Europe or without it, we can, we must, we will, deliver the Armenians."*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.10*

Remember now that to "deliver the Armenians" means war. If one Power should undertake it alone, without the concurrence of the other Powers, it would result in a general war of all the Powers ranged against one another according to their several interests; if there were agreement, then the war would be against the Turks alone; but in any case there would be war. Remember also that this war is just what ministers of the Gospel were and are still pleading for; and remember also the statement that the meeting showed "in how large a degree the best conscience of the people is permeated with the idea that the ethical principles of the Sermon on the Mount are applicable in all their simplicity to the complex problems of international relations," and it will be seen how greatly men have allowed their passions to cloud their perception of the simplicity of the Gospel as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.11*

Jesus said, in the Sermon on the Mount, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." And further, "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them

that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” *Matthew 5:38, 39, 44, 45.* *SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.12*

That is all that is in the Sermon on the Mount that is especially applicable to this question, yet so far have professed Christians lost sight of its principles, that they can complacently cite their clamors for bloodshed and revenge as being an illustration of those principles. Indeed, it is from religious teachers and the religious press that the demand for vengeance principally comes, because they regard the case as one of religious persecution and therefore as especially concerning them. Now let the candid reader pause and think seriously, and say if such a perversion of the Gospel is not the most fearfully deplorable thing that could possibly happen. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 162.13*

The killing of a few thousands of people by men who do not profess to be Christians, is horrible enough; but more horribly wicked still is it when professors and ministers of the Gospel everywhere fill the minds of the people with the idea that war and vengeance are in harmony with and manifestations of the fundamental principles of Christianity. Such teaching only serves to nourish and glorify the natural fierceness which the Bible says will be characteristic of the last days; and with the people become fully imbued with it, there will be needed only a spark to set the whole world ablaze with the fire of hell. When the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace, is used as a war cry, where shall we look for peace on earth? *SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.1*

The Vengeful Spirit

It seems as though Christendom were becoming intoxicated with the spirit of vengeance, so that the most peaceably inclined men have lost their senses. One religious paper reprints some floating newspaper stories derogatory to the character of Turks in general, and then exclaims editorially:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.2*

Ought such a nation to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the

earth?*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.3*

and that but expresses the general sentiment among preachers and people.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.4*

Just analyze this: "Ought such a nation to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?" is the same as, "Ought such people to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?" and that includes thousands of individuals, and of each of whom it is virtually said, "Ought such a person to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?" That is to say, the spirit of intolerance is already so firmly rooted in the hearts of professed Christians, that they do not wish to tolerate for a moment the existence of those whom they, taking the throne of judgment, have decided to be unfit to live. What is that but charging God with laxness in the discharge of His duty, because He suffers wicked men to live?*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.5*

How different from the Spirit of Christ. When He was rejected by the Samaritans, and two disciples wished to command fire to come down and consume the inhospitable people, He rebuked them, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." *Luke 9:51-56*. The Spirit of desiring to be the instruments of God's vengeance has always been more prominent than the desire to be instruments of His mercy, and when it is once cherished it inevitably results in getting ahead of the Lord, and being both judge and executioner.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.6*

The True Christian Spirit

But we have a still stronger rebuke of this bitter, warlike spirit. When Jesus had been betrayed into the hands of His enemies, and a mob of man came to seize Him and put Him to death, Peter drew a sword in His defense. The blow just missed the head of one of the gang of murderers, and cut off his ear. "Then Jesus said to him, Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." *Matthew 26:51, 52*. And then, as an evidence that He came not to take life but to save it, Jesus healed His wounded enemy. *Luke 22:50, 51*.*SITI March 18, 1897, page*

If there was ever a time when it was right to resist oppression and injustice, it was then. Jesus was innocent, as even His judges declared. Here was the worst kind of religious persecution. Every indignity, insult, and outrage was heaped upon Jesus, yet He opened not His mouth, and forbade His followers to fight in His defense. How then can any of His followers fight in defense of themselves, or even of their brethren who are persecuted? The disciple is not greater than his Lord.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.8*

Peter was well-meaning and sincere in his defense of the Lord, and so would we fain believe are those who now counsel drawing the sword in behalf of the Armenians. But Peter did not then know the spirit of the Gospel. He was not converted, and within a few hours after his impulsive defense he denied that he knew the Lord. His example is not one to be followed by disciples of Christ. When he became converted, he learned to know the Lord, and then he wrote:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.9*

“If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” *1 Peter 2:20-23*. Christians are called to follow Christ’s example, and to suffer unjustly, without complaining, much less resisting; yet all over the world professed Christians are denying this calling. Why is it?—It is because a spirit, not from the Lord, is seeking to drive them to destruction, for Jesus said, “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” If Satan can only succeed in filling Christians with such zeal for any cause whatever, and no matter how worthy, that they will fight for it, He knows that their destruction is sure.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.10*

The Wicked, Devastating Sword

Mark the word “all.” There is no exception. “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” One of our poets has pleaded that *SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.11*

The just, the holy, the benignant sword might be drawn in behalf of the Armenians, and professed Christians have applauded the sentiment; but the sword is always unjust, unholy, and devastating. It makes no difference who handles it. The sword vigorously wielded by the hands of professed Christians will work as much havoc and destruction as in the hands of infidels, as history abundantly proves, and therefore it is just as cruel and unholy. The fact that a man calls himself a Christian, does not make it any more a righteous deed for him to cleave another man’s head with the sword, than it would be if a Turk did the same thing. How can anybody think that that which is wicked on the part of a Mohammedan is righteous on the part of a Christian? Is it so that Christians have a monopoly of crime in this world? and that no one but Christians can murder their fellow-beings with impunity? Does the reputation that a man has determine the character of the deed he commits? If a man that is known to be a good man commits a murder, does that make the murder a righteous act? and is murder sinful only when perpetrated by men of previous bad reputation? That is the theory upon which is based the outcry against slaughter by the Turks, and the demand for the slaughter of the Turks. But it is a horrible doctrine. No; “he that doeth righteousness is righteous,” and “every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin.” When professed Christians do the deeds, and even overpass the deeds of the heathen, they nullify their profession, and place themselves in the ranks of the heathen. They are then worse than the heathen, because their high profession makes the insolence of their evil deeds the greater. Oh, the pity of the thing, that such a spirit should be consecrated by the name of Christianity! *SITI March 18, 1897, page 163.12*

Who Makes Them to Differ?

The prevailing idea seems to be that it is far worse to kill Christians than to kill non-Christians. Thus there is a great outcry when Armenians are killed, and on the contrary rejoicing when Turks are killed. Who has ever heard any sorrow expressed for the thousands

of Turks who were butchered in the crusades? A religious paper that is loud in its outcry against Turks who kill, publishes without protest as a matter of simple history, the following:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.1*

The founder of the reigning House of Montenegro was Daniel Petrovitch. He was elected Metropolitan in 1696, uniting in himself both the temporal and spiritual powers. On Christmas night, 1702, he cut to pieces all the Turks he could find in his dominions.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.2*

It is doubtful if there would be much if any indignation anywhere in Christendom if the Armenians should now slaughter the Turks in a similar manner. Indeed, the comments that followed the attack upon the Ottoman Bank furnish a case in point. At first it was thought to be a master stroke on the part of the Armenians; but afterwards, when the theory was circulated that the affair was planned by the Turks, then it was denounced as a dastardly outrage. It is on the same principle that when white men with machine guns kill several thousand blacks, it is a brilliant victory, and when the blacks retaliate upon a few dozen white that they succeed in overpowering, it is a cruel massacre.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.3*

A well-known prelate has expressed regret that the Spirit of the Crusades has been allowed to die out to the extent that it has, yet he can scarcely be ignorant of the fact that in those Crusades Mohammedans were butchered without mercy, simply because they were Mohammedans. The following brief extract describing the entry of the "Christians" into Jerusalem, amply shows the spirit and work of the Crusades:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.4*

The Saracens gave way before them. They retreated through the streets, fighting at intervals until they were driven into the precincts of the mosque of Omar. Blood flowed in the gutters, and horrid heaps of the dead lay piled at every corner. None were spared by the frenzied Christians, who saw in the gore of the infidels the white way of redemption. Ten thousand dead, scattered through the city, gave token of the merciless spirit of the men of the West. Another ten thousand were heaped in the reeking courts of the great mosque on Mount Moriah. "God wills it," said the pilgrims.... The

Spirit of the massacre is well illustrated in a letter which the Christian princes sent to the Pope. The devout writers say: "If you wish to know what we did to the enemies we found in the city, learn that in the portico of Solomon and in the temple our horses walked up to the knees in the in pure blood of the Saracens." *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.5*

The Crusaders are applauded, while the Turks, who have not equaled them in ferocity, are execrated. Why this difference? *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.6*

In the Philippine Islands the Spaniards are at this very time slaughtering their Mohammedan subjects by the hundreds, showing no mercy to prisoners, but perpetrating the grossest cruelties. Yet there is no demand for the wiping out of the Spanish nation. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.7*

At the same time that the troubles were taking place in Turkey, English soldiers in Africa, under the direction of the Government, were slaughtering African natives. The white man's machine guns mowed down the comparatively unarmed blacks making "a mere jujube of black humanity." When the natives fled and took refuge in caves, these were blown up with dynamite; men, women, and children, torn and mangled, were thus buried, both dead and alive in one common grave. These reports come not from the victims, but from the victors; yet we hear of no meetings called to protest, nor any claims that English people are too wicked to be allowed to live, as indeed they are not. The same course has been pursued with the Indians in America, until now there are but few left. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.8*

We do not cite these things as accusations, but simply for the purpose of asking why it is so much worse for Turks to kill people than it is for English and Americans; why that which is denounced as an outrage when done by Mohammedans is a thing for applause when done by professed Christians. Truly, the times are sadly out of joint. Why is it so much worse for Mohammedans to kill Christians than for "Christians" to kill Mohammedans? Can anybody tell. Is it worse to kill a Christian, who has hope in his death, then to cut short the probation of one who does not know the Lord? Think

of the awful responsibility men take upon themselves when they set themselves not merely to execute God's judgment on the ungodly, but to anticipate Him, and to send them into eternity while He is waiting for them to repent.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.9*

A Mistaken Idea

Thus far, in order that the case might stand in the strongest possible light, we have taken it for granted that the trouble in Turkey is simply religious persecution. The prevailing sentiment is thus expressed:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.10*

The recent atrocities are an exhibition of Moslem fanaticism and hatred of Christians, which the Powers strangely permit.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.11*

Now anybody who will take the trouble to think calmly and seriously, can satisfy himself that this is not at all the case. One simple fact alone is sufficient evidence. The Greek Church is just as much Christian as is the Armenian, yet it is a well-known fact that in all the troubles in Turkey, the Greeks have not suffered. In the midst of the greatest excitement in Constantinople, if a man were arrested, or were in danger of death, he would secure his instant release by showing that he was a Greek. If the Turks were persecuting Christians, why should they be so careful not to molest the Greeks?*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.12*

Again, there are many Roman Catholics in Turkey, yet there has been no proceeding against them. We mention these three bodies—Armenians, Greeks, and Roman Catholics—together, because they are very similar. While the Armenian Church is nominally Christian, it is a well-known fact that it is most intolerant of Protestants, as much so as is the Roman Catholic. Protestant work in territory exclusively Armenian is attended with as much difficulty as in Spain. That is no reason why they should be killed, or why those who are suffering should not be assisted; but it may help some who assist the needy to do so on the simple ground that they are needy mortals, and not under the mistaken notion that they are suffering for conscience' sake.*SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.13*

In September last, just after the last outbreak, the writer witnessed a baptismal scene at Constantinople. It was at a time when the Turkish soldiers were patrolling the streets night and day; one could not turn a corner without seeing a squad of them. In the open day, without asking permission of anybody, a company of Christians went through the streets to the sea, to witness the immersion of some believers. The place of baptism was about midway between the Mohammedan mosques, and within bowshot of each. About half of the company were Armenians, the rest Greeks, and the administrator of the rite was an Armenian. Such a company walking together very naturally attracted a little attention, and a policeman asked what it meant. Upon being told, he said that was all right, and paid no more attention. At the sea there were Turks standing near, witnessing the baptism, and yet there was not so much as a disrespectful or irreverent word or gesture. There could not have been better decorum in any city in the world. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.14*

It might be well to add that the body represented on that occasion are not revolutionists, and are known to have no connection whatever with politics, but are content with being simply Christians. This is why they have had no difficulty. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.15*

Another instance will show that the Turkish opposition is against those who are plotting insurrection, and not against those who are teaching the Gospel. A young man, an Armenian residing in Scutari, was in Stamboul, and not being known to the police there, was arrested as a possible revolutionist. He told the police that he was a Sabbatarian, and they brought him to the house where the Sabbatarians were known to be assembled holding religious services, to see if it were so. When they were assured that he spoke the truth, he was released. But that was not all. The young men engaged the policeman in religious conversation, and the writer twice passed the door of the room where they were, and saw that Mohammedan Turkish policeman sitting on a divan with the Christian Armenian, each with a Bible in his hand, reading. The thought would not be repressed, that if all profess to be Christians had used the sword of the Spirit instead of the carnal weapon in their dealings with the Turks, there might be a different story to

Is the Gospel for the Turks?

It is said, as proof that the Turks are animated solely by hatred of Christians, that people have been promised their lives on condition that they would turn Mohammedan, and give up the name Christian. That is very probably true. When revolution and anarchy are upheld and applauded throughout Christendom, what wonder is it if the Turks should, to a certain extent at least, associate Christianity and anarchy together? When to be a "Christian" is considered, and with good reason, synonymous with being an enemy of the Turks and the Turkish Government, the repression of revolution would very naturally be considered as simply the repression of too active Christianity. In such case it could easily be that real Christians, who hold the name as something more than a national sign, might suffer because they would not give up their faith, the Mohammedans not being able to distinguish between them and those who use the name as a cover for anarchy. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.17*

In prophetic vision the Apostle John saw "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues," standing before the throne of God, clothed with white robes, and bearing palms of victory over sin and Satan. *Revelation 7:9*. That is positive evidence that there will be Turks in heaven. Yet one would not gather from reading the religious press, that there was any possibility of salvation for a Turk. It may be said that the Turks are bitterly prejudiced against Christianity. That is true, and who could expect it to be otherwise? Christianity is to them embodied in the boasted "Christian nations" of Europe, and none of these have ever done anything to recommend the name. But that is not all. Those religious bodies, professing to be Christian, of which the Turks have most knowledge, are the Greek and Armenian churches, and in one important particular the Mohammedan has good reason to believe that his religion is superior to theirs; for he sees the members of those bodies bowing down to and adoring images and pictures, while the Mohammedan abominates the worship of titles. But even this is not the worst. From the time of the Crusades professed Christians as a rule have regarded the Turks with lofty contempt, as beings to be execrated and driven off; now,

all Christendom is ringing with unchristian cries for vengeance upon the Turks, and even their utter extermination. Can it be wondered at that the Turks are not drawn towards Christianity, or that they are suspicious of foreigners? But when the just Judge of all the earth punishes the Turks for their misdeeds, who dare say that none of their blood will be upon the garments of those who bear the name of Christian? We appeal to individual Christians to clear themselves, by being Christlike in their words and acts, from all responsibility for Turkish indifference to Christianity. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 164.18*

The Great Deception

There is a cause for this present cry against the Turks. That it is not caused by the Spirit of Christ, needs no argument. What spirit it is that is even now working, may be seen by remembering what it is desired to do with the Turks. The least thing that is demanded, is that they be driven from Europe. Such atrocities, it is said, ought not to be allowed on European soil. But will they be any better on Asiatic soil?—Certainly not. Then what would necessarily be the next step after driving them from Europe—manifestly, to drive them from Asia, that is, from the earth, so far at least as their existence as a nation is concerned. This is even now demanded. Their overthrow will be the last act in the scheme to place the world under the dominion of so-called Christian powers, thus to fulfill the dreams of a temporal millennium, in which so many have indulged. But each one of these “Christian Powers” will wish to have the supremacy, and so the armies of all will be assembled in Palestine, the centre of the Sultan’s Asiatic dominion,—when the last struggle takes place. That gathering is thus described in prophecy:—*SITI March 18, 1897, page 165.1*

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty... And he they gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” *Revelation 16:13-16. SITI March 18, 1897, page 165.2*

Here we are plainly told what spirit brings the kings of the earth together at that place. That deception we see working even now; for that Christendom is being deceived is painfully evident. If men were not already grossly deceived, how could they *in the name of Christ* counsel war? How could they so misrepresent true Christianity before the world as to claim that the blood even of martyrs demands revenge by the sword? Is it not a terrible deception that is even now closing in upon the world? What an awful thought, that every man, be he minister of the Gospel or not, who is upbraiding the powers for naught concerning the Turks, is simply an unconscious agent of Satan to gather the kings of earth to that great battle which is to result in the ruin of all. God grant that many who have thoughtlessly been led away by a popular clamor, may recover themselves from the snare of the devil before it is too late, and show to the world, including the Turks, that Christianity means to be like Christ. We have full faith that this prayer will be answered. E. J. W. *SITI March 18, 1897, page 165.3*

March 25, 1897

“Boldness to Enter” The Signs of the Times, 23, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” *Hebrews 10:19, 22*. “That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.” *Luke 1:74, 75*. As we have access by Christ unto the Father, of what need we be afraid? *SITI March 25, 1897, page 2.1*

One who has free access to the palace and the table of royalty will not tremble with fear in the presence of some lower officer of State. Such an one enters the presence of the highest in the kingdom, and it is only a light matter to come before ordinary people. *SITI March 25, 1897, page 2.2*

How can it be that one who has boldness to enter into the presence of the King of kings, even into his secret chamber, not merely into the outer court, but into the “secret place of the Most High,” and not only to enter there, but to abide, as a friend who has a right there,—how can such an one be afraid of anything else in the universe? We have that privilege, and the Lord desires us to use it. *SITI March 25, 1897, page 2.3*

How would any parent feel, who has a parent’s heart, if his children should start with fear when he came into the room? If when they wanted something they should come cringing in a fearful manner, as tho they did not know whether or not they had a right to live? We like them to have that confidence in us that they will come with boldness and ask for that which they want, knowing that it will be given them if it is for the best. *SITI March 25, 1897, page 2.4*

So we can imagine how God must feel to have those for whom he has done everything, for whom he has given his life to bring all things to them, and has given them all things before they asked, fearing to come to him to claim anything, almost apologizing for

their very existence. He does not want us to be afraid of him.*SITI March 25, 1897, page 2.5*

The Lord came down to earth to show us how gentle he is. He lived and talked with people. He sat down by the wayside with them. He took children in his arms and blessed them, and they were not afraid of him. Whosoever will receive the kingdom of God must receive it as a child, with trusting confidence. He is goodness, and mercy, and tender-heartedness itself. He is pleased at our very boldness.*SITI March 25, 1897, page 2.6*

The boldness is not presumption; it is not arrogance. No one who is puffed up with pride, who is haughty, can ever come into the presence of the Lord with boldness. The pride and arrogance of men is simply the result of their separation from him. When they put him far off, and hide him from them, they can be very bold. But when they come into the presence of God, every mouth will be stopped. It is impossible for one to come into the presence of the Lord with arrogance, knowing that he is in his presence.*SITI March 25, 1897, page 3.1*

But the believer may come with boldness, lifting up the head. It shows that we believe that he is a God who keeps his word, that he is just what he is, a God of tenderness and infinite loving-kindness. And dwelling in the secret place, and abiding under his shadow, there is no fear. "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday." "Thine heart shall meditate terror," but there will be no fear in it.*SITI March 25, 1897, page 3.2*

If we can endure the time of greatest trouble, such as is here described, when destruction shall be over all the land, then we can have no fear now. No matter what persecution might be stirred up, we are free in the Lord, without fear, because we are walking and talking with the Lord; enduring as seeing him who is invisible. We can stand in the presence of authorities and kings, if need be, to answer for the faith, and not be afraid; because we are living in the presence of the King of kings. E. J. W.*SITI March 25, 1897, page 3.3*

April 1, 1897

“The Knowledge of Want” The Signs of the Times, 23, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

The Word says, “There is no want to them that fear Him.” That is because that when we know the Lord, we no sooner have a knowledge of want than the want is supplied. The revelation or sense of want comes from him. So when we feel the want in our soul, it is God’s way of saying he has that thing to give us.*SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.1*

You want righteousness, do you? That is, you feel the lack of it. How did you find out that you wanted it? who told you your need?—The Lord let you know that want. How did he make you know it?—Simply by the revelation of the thing which will supply the want.*SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.2*

If we were to go into the wilds of Africa, out of the tract of civilization entirely, where the people know absolutely nothing of the conveniences of modern life, should we find the people begging for watches, for instance?—Of course not; they would know nothing about such things. But in our cities a boy doesn’t get very old before he wants a watch. The knowledge of that thing, and the possibility of it, create the want.*SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.3*

Why is it that you want righteousness?—It is only because the Lord has revealed righteousness to you, the knowledge of right; for there can be no knowledge of wrong without the corresponding knowledge of right. We know a thing is wrong because it is contrary to the right.*SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.4*

In every heart there are desires, greater or less, for a better life. We do not know how many discouraged souls there are longing to be delivered from the degradation into which they have fallen. They do not know how to get deliverance; and the reason is that they do not know love. They have not learned that God is love, and they have not seen God’s love manifested in those with whom they have associated, and so they do not know how to have their longings

supplied. But every desire of the human heart for anything better, every longing for righteousness, has been created by the Lord, and created in order that the soul might hold to him for the supply of the want. *SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.5*

Whenever we want to be better than we are, the very moment that want comes, it is the plain language of God to us, saying, "Here is something that you lack; take it." This is why there is no want to them that fear God; for every want is supplied in the very knowledge of it, if we but know it. In Christ there is everything, even the fullness of God. He is the "Desire of all nations," and in him is all that men can desire. *SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.6*

Illegitimate Desire

Men may, it is true, desire many things that are not in Christ. But we can all testify from our own experience that the receiving of those things did not satisfy the desire. There was still a want there. Then that was not the real thing that we wanted, after all. We thought it would satisfy us, but a trial of it showed that there was no satisfaction in it. *SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.7*

It is as if we should sit at a table, hungry, and should try first one thing and then another, without finding the hunger satisfied. At last we find just the thing which the taste seemed to be calling for and which satisfied. There are longings as of the intemperate man for drink. He drinks; but he is not satisfied. The more he drinks, the more the longing is cultivated. There is this and that pleasure that men desire and indulge in, which do not satisfy. The Lord says, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." *Isaiah 55:2. SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.8*

There is not a longing in man that is not, unconsciously to himself it may be, really a drawing out after God, and for something which God can supply. So David says, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." *Psalms 84:2*. The nature of the flesh is sinful, and always sinful. But all this longing of the flesh is dissatisfaction.

There is only one thing that can satisfy, and that is God. He is the Desire of all nations, and he satisfies “the desire of every living thing.” *SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.9*

If you really do want to be better, if you want God’s righteousness, just stop and thank him that he has given it to you. “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.” E. J. W. *SITI April 1, 1897, page 195.10*

April 8, 1897

“Speculation and Faith” The Signs of the Times, 23, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

Speculation is uncertainty. It is always a risk. A man ventures something, not knowing what the result will be. He thinks that a certain investment will be a safe one, and will yield large returns, but he is not sure. He has no means of being sure. If he could be sure of the result, it would not be speculation. Very often the man who feels the most confident of the good results of his investment is most sorely disappointed. *SITI April 8, 1897, page 211.1*

This element of uncertainty is that which wears out the speculator, and makes him prematurely old. His nerves are always in tension. He may have all his fortune at stake, and it is impossible for him to rest in perfect ease when he knows that a very little thing may dash it from him in a moment. No wonder that a man in such a condition often finds it impossible to sleep. *SITI April 8, 1897, page 211.2*

Faith is altogether different from this. Faith knows. It runs no risks. There is no element of uncertainty in it. Christ is the only object of faith, and he is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” He never fails. His power is almighty, and he loses nothing that is intrusted to him; no one can snatch anything from his hands. See *John 10:28, 29; 17:12. SITI April 8, 1897, page 211.3*

Christ is the “tried stone,” the “precious corner-stone,” the “sure foundation;” and “he that believeth in him shall not be confounded.” His ability to keep is shown in the fact that he upholds all things by the word of his power. *Hebrews 4:13*. When the Lord would encourage us to put our trust in him, he says, “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking.” *Isaiah 40:26, R.V. SITI April 8, 1897, page 211.4*

So it is as unto “a faithful Creator” that we are to commit the keeping of our souls to him. That which may be known of him, even

“his eternal power and Godhead,” is clearly revealed in the things that he has made, so that all have ample opportunity to become acquainted with him. Therefore the language of faith is, “I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” *2 Timothy 1:12*, margin. *SITI April 8, 1897, page 211.5*

Faith knows nothing of worry. There is no straining of the nerves to the utmost pitch of anxiety, for fear of what may happen in the future. He who knows the Lord would as soon think of worrying lest a comet should strike the earth, or lest the earth should come into collision with some other planet, and thus be wrecked, as to worry lest at some future time the Lord might allow him to fall. His strength is in quietness and confidence. Under the shadow of the Almighty he abides secure, and is not afraid, knowing that nothing present or to come can separate the soul from that “everlasting love.” E. J. W. *SITI April 8, 1897, page 211.6*

April 29, 1897

“What Can He Say?” The Signs of the Times, 23, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

In a meeting of the Foreign Missionary Society of the American M. E. Church, a returned missionary to Persia, who was described as “full of enthusiasm for his work,” spoke as follows:*SITI April 29, 1897, page 2.1*

I am often asked by the Persians how it is, if the Christian religion be the pure Gospel I claim, that my nation, Christian America, has a far longer list of crimes than Persia? What can I reply? What can I do but bow my head in shame, and raise my heart in prayer to God to lift the cloud from rum cursed America? O, this Christian nation will have to rouse from her slumber, and sweep this evil from her borders, ere she can hold out pure hands to other nations, asking them to accept her Bible and her God!*SITI April 29, 1897, page 2.2*

A man who would have any trouble in answering such a question as that asked by the Persians, ought to get better acquainted with the Gospel before going out as a missionary. He should learn that the Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth,” no matter in what land he dwells. He should be able to assure the questioners that the Gospel is an individual matter, and that therefore America is not, never was, and never will be Christian, and that it is not possible that any nation on earth, as a nation, can be Christian.*SITI April 29, 1897, page 2.3*

The fact that America “has a far longer list of crimes than Persia,” is all the evidence that is needed to show that it is not Christian; for Christianity means freedom from sin. America is no more a Christian nation than Persia is.*SITI April 29, 1897, page 2.4*

But it would doubtless be most galling to the missionary’s “patriotism” to make such an answer as that. And that is the trouble with too many missionaries, both home and foreign. A mistaken loyalty to their native country interferes with their loyalty to the Gospel. If they could but learn that true Christianity is only a

sojourner on this earth,—a pilgrim and a stranger even in the land of his birth,—and that his citizenship is in heaven, they would not be embarrassed by such questions as were asked the missionary to Persia. The only country in which they would have a special interest, as a country, would be the heavenly country. *SITI April 29, 1897, page 3.1*

But would not the same charge against the Gospel remain unanswered, namely, that it can not be as pure as is claimed, or else it would have more influence in diminishing crime in America? —Not by any means. The Gospel cleanses from sin and crime all who accept it, and no others. If it were less pure than it is, it would be more generally accepted; but then it would be of no use. The Lord himself gave no warrant for supposing that the majority of men in any nation would accept the Gospel, but, on the contrary, warned his followers that they must always be comparatively few in number, and must suffer persecution. *SITI April 29, 1897, page 3.2*

The Gospel knows nothing about natural or artificial boundaries on this earth. It is to be “to all people.” It knows nothing about states and governments. Its mission is to “every creature.” Kingdoms may rise and fall, nations may extend their boundaries, and others may be absorbed, but none of these things concern the ambassadors for Christ. They are the representatives of no country but heaven, and are accredited to no earthly government, but to the world as a whole, and to the whole world considered as individuals, who are to be transformed by it, and made to live a different life as individuals. When all of Christ’s ambassadors fully realize this truth, then will their mission be clothed with a dignity and power befitting its exalted origin. E. J. W. *SITI April 29, 1897, page 3.3*

May 6, 1897

“Sacrifices” The Signs of the Times, 23, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

Sacrifices.-There is only one sacrifice in the Christian religion, and that was made by Christ. We have never made a sacrifice. God does not call us to make sacrifices, but to accept the sacrifice that has been made. True, we have to give up all things that pertain to self, but giving up self is simply taking Christ.*SITI May 6, 1897, page 3.1*

Suppose a poor beggar comes to us, with ragged clothing, and a few coppers in his pocket, and we say to him, “Take off these rags, and we will give you a new suit; and give up the coppers, and we will fill your pockets with sovereigns.” Would he begin to mourn, or talk about the great sacrifice he was called upon to make in giving up his rags and the coppers he had in them?*SITI May 6, 1897, page 3.2*

Of course we give up something, but what sacrifice is it, when we get ten thousand times as much, and infinitely more? God wants us to give up our miserable ways, and take his ways; our narrow, circumscribed thoughts, and take his thoughts; our poverty, and get his robes; our gross ignorance, and get his wisdom; our wickedness, and get his righteousness. E. J. W.*SITI May 6, 1897, page 3.3*

May 13, 1897

“Our High Calling” The Signs of the Times, 23, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

When Peter, in his boat on the Sea of Galilee, saw the power of Jesus of Nazareth over the sea and its inhabitants, he fell down before the Lord, saying, “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” *Luke 5:8*. It was the same feeling that prompted Isaiah, when he saw the same Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, to exclaim, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” *Isaiah 6:5. SITI May 13, 1897, page 2.1*

It is worthy of note, also, that both those men who thus confess their sinfulness, were at once accepted as workers. To Peter, the Lord said, “Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men,” literally, “thou shalt be catching men alive.” But Peter had to be converted before he could strengthen the brethren; and likewise the coal from off the altar had to touch the lips of Isaiah, and purge his sin, before he could say, “Here am I; send me,” to the call “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” and could be told, “Go.” *SITI May 13, 1897, page 2.2*

Herein is hope and a wondrous calling for every sinner. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He receives and saves sinners, and then, having received them into his confidence, he sends them forth as his representatives, to carry his message of mercy to other sinners. He takes us as associates with him. He was made flesh, and took the nature of fallen humanity, in order to save men; and so he commits the work not to angels, but to those who have felt the power of the sins that oppress those to whom they are sent. To thus work with Christ is the highest honor that the universe can bestow. E. J. W. *SITI May 13, 1897, page 2.3*

May 27, 1897

“Only a Shadow” The Signs of the Times, 23, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

Only a Shadow. —Every shadow of darkness, every cloud of gloom, every fear of whatever kind, is simply the shadow of death and of the devil. He has cast his hellish shadow over the world. Now, as Zacharias prophesied by the Holy Ghost, at the birth of his son, the Lord has visited us and delivered us out of the hand of our enemies, that we “might serve him without fear.” *SITI May 27, 1897, page 323.1*

He has delivered us from every tremor of fear, and hath sent the Dayspring from on high “to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.” If you have his life, you have his light. What is there to be afraid of? To the one in Christ, death itself is only a shadow. The sting is gone. Satan can cast the shadow over him, but there is nothing in a shadow to be afraid of. He is delivered from the power of darkness. He is going through an enemy’s land, whose weapons are all broken. He is going into a nest of scorpions, whose stings have been removed. He is going into a prison-house, the key of which is held by One who loves him. E. J. W. *SITI May 27, 1897, page 323.2*

July 1, 1897

“Editorial. Thine Is the Kingdom” The Signs of the Times, 23, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

“Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”
Matthew 6:13.SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.1

This is an everlasting truth, for the Lord himself has spoken it; yet to how many who daily utter the words are they little more than a form of speech! As a matter of fact, this confession; which if made with the spirit and with the understanding, brings the soul into the closest and most perfect relation to God!*SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.2*

The kingdom belongs to God. How extensive is it?—“The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.” *Psalms 103:19*. “The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.” *Habakkuk 2:20.SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.3*

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein.” *Psalms 24:1.SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.4*

“The Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” *Daniel 4:17*. “For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen; God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.” *Psalms 47:7, 8*. Wherever in the universe created beings can look up and see a canopy of space above them, there is God’s kingdom. Read *Psalms 139:1-12.SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.5*

People in general do not recognize God as universal King, but that makes no difference with the father. A portion of God’s dominion is for rebellion against him; but that does not destroy the fact that the kingdom is his by right. Many people worship gods of their own making, but that does not destroy the fact that there is but one God. In the beginning God gave the dominion of this earth to man. *Genesis 1:28*, but he did not thereby renounce his right to it. God is the King of kinds, and it pleased him to rule the portion of his

dominion through man whom he had made in his image. Man was but simply the agent through whom God made manifest his power on earth. The fact that man has refused to be the instrument of God's will, does not in the least impair God's original and eternal right to the kingdom. *SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.6*

But our confession to God comes closer home. When the unbelieving Pharisees demanded that Jesus should tell when the kingdom of God should come, he replied: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here, or, lo there, for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." *Luke 17:20, 21. SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.7*

There is a story of a king who visited a school and questioned the pupils. Taking up a paper weight, he asked them to what kingdom it belonged. They replied, "To the mineral kingdom." Then pointing to a plant, he asked the same question, and they said, "To the vegetable kingdom. Then he asked, "To what kingdom do I belong?" The children were afraid to say that he belonged to the animal kingdom, and as they hesitated, one said, "To God's kingdom." That was a truth, for every created thing in the universe belongs to God's kingdom, and there is but one law for all, namely, God's life. *SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.8*

Some one will say, "But God does not rule in wicked men's hearts." Quite true, because his rule is love, which they reject; but the fact remains that every human heart is God's rightful kingdom. His right is demonstrated by the fact that "he giveth to all life and breath, and all things;" "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." *Acts 17:26, 28*. It is with his life alone that we live, for we have none of our own and since the life belongs to him, he alone has the right to direct it. *SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.9*

That which may be known of God, that is, "his eternal power and Godhead, it manifest in men, even in the heathen, as well as in all the things that God has made. *Romans 1:19, 20*. But men, unlike the trees of the field, "hold down the truth in unrighteousness," choosing rather to be their own masters than to allow God to rule. But "the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." *Jeremiah 10:23*. Man has no more power in

himself than the grass of the field has, and therefore when he attempts to rule the kingdom himself, he makes a sad failure.*SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.10*

Who alone has the right to rule?—He to whom the kingdom belongs. So when we say the Lord, “Thine is the kingdom,” we acknowledge that he alone has the right to rule, not only in our hearts, but in all the earth. But if we truly acknowledge the fact, we yield the kingdom fully to his control.*SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.11*

Just here is where many make a fatal mistake. They say, “The kingdom is the Lord’s, but people in general will not acknowledge it, therefore we must compel them to submit to him.” Such a course as that is virtually a denial of the fact that the kingdom is the Lord’s. To say the least, God is as able to use force as we are, and if he wished people to be forced to submit to him, he could do it. The fact that he does not compel people to serve him, is sufficient evidence that he does not wish men to seek to do so. His law is love, and therefore force is in direct opposition to his kingdom.*SITI July 1, 1897, page 385.12*

All that we are called upon to do, no matter who we may be, is to acknowledge God’s right to the kingdom. Whoever acknowledges that the kingdom—that is, all mankind, including himself—belongs to God, will very naturally refrain from attempting to rule any part of it. He to whom the kingdom belongs has the sole right to rule, and if we are sincere in our acknowledgment of God’s right, we will not meddle with his affairs. We will leave him to deal with other people as he sees best. By acknowledging his right to rule *all* the kingdom, we ourselves disclaim the right to rule *any portion* of it, even to our own lives. The only part of the kingdom, however, that we can yield up to God is ourselves. When we have done this, then we may tell others how good his rule is, and persuade them also to yield to his dominion.*SITI July 1, 1897, page 386.1*

There is strength in the heartfelt confession. “Thine is the kingdom,” for God is able to protect his own. The battle is not ours, but his to whom we belong—“the King of glory.” “Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.” In his hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand him. His

thoughts toward us are thoughts of peace, and he desires nothing so much as our welfare both here and in eternity. What a blessed thing to know that “the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us.” E. J. W*SITI* July 1, 1897, page 386.2

July 8, 1897

“Editorial. The Power and the Glory” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The Power and the Glory. —“Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.” *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.1*

The Kingdom is the Lord’s, and it includes the whole universe. Nothing is outside his jurisdiction. Every creature in the heavens and the earth rightfully belongs to his dominion. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.2*

A King Must Have Power; for a king without power is a king only; in name. God is really King, and therefore to Him belongs power. “God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.” *Psalms 62:11. SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.3*

No Division of Power. —We must not fall into the error of limiting God, by thinking that power is divided, and that he has merely a share of it, even tho it be the largest share. “Thine is *the kingdom and the power*.” “His kingdom ruleth over all;” and wherever his kingdom is, his power is supreme. God alone has power. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.4*

God the Almighty One. —That is to say, he has *all might*. Therefore no one being possesses any might in himself. Because God possess all the power in the universe. Christ, the only-begotten Son, could say, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.5*

All of God. —“In him we live, and move, and have our being.” *Acts 17:28*. Every motion that is made, every thought, every word, requires the exercise of power; but the power is not inherent in the man who moves, but in God. “There is no power but of God.” *Romans 13:1*. The power which men have to fight and blaspheme God, and to commit all sorts of wickedness, is but God’s power perverted, just as the performance of righteous acts, and the utterance of praise, is God’s power given free course. *SITI July 8,*

1897, page 401.6

Evidence of His Love. —Light-minded persons may see in this occasion for charging God foolishly; but others will see in it his supreme abounding grace and his everlasting love. While some think that God's seeming abundant grace is an evidence of weakness, or of complicity with crime, the well-instructed will "account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." 2 *Peter* 3:14. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.7*

The Patience of Power. —If God were not sure of his "everlasting strength," he could not thus sit still and see men defy him to his face, and even use his own power in opposition to him. But he has the patience of conscious omnipotence. Knowing that he really has power, he can not, like many men, be tempted to make an exhibition of it simply to demonstrate to scoffers that he possesses it. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.8*

His Power to Save. —God desires that men should be saved, and in the Gospel he manifests his power to save them. All God's power, and every revelation of it, is for the purpose of leading men to trust him for their soul's salvation. The fact that men misunderstand God, even willfully, and pervert the power which he reveals in them for their salvation, does not discourage him or throw him into a passion. Still he graciously manifests his power in them, in hope that at last they will allow him to use it to his own glory in their salvation. God's power is the power of love, and love does not use force, therefore he patiently waits, until he is positively and definitely rejected. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.9*

Joy in His Power. —What wonderful joy comes with the recognition that all power is God's. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." *Ephesians* 2:8. Our salvation depends on him, and he has the power. His kingdom is in our hearts, but his enemy has been allowed to come in and raise the standard of rebellion. Nevertheless, as soon as we definitely choose the Lord for our King and our Lawgiver, he will save us by his mighty power. *Isaiah* 33:22. He has power to drive out every enemy. What a comfort to rest confidently in the almighty power of our God! *SITI July 8, 1897, page 401.10*

His Is the Glory. —Not only ought it to be, but *it is*. The last message before the coming of the Lord, calls loudly upon men to “fear God, and give glory to him,” as the One who “made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” *Revelation 14:6, 7*. We are to give glory to him, because it belongs to him. His is the glory, because his is the power. Whoever takes glory to himself for anything that he possesses or has done, thereby robs God. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 402.1*

Glory in His Word. —“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth.” *Jeremiah 9:23, 24*. Wisdom, power, and riches, all come from the Lord; therefore “he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” *1 Corinthians 1:31*. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 402.2*

An Instance. —Take a single example, in the line of wisdom. On the day of Pentecost, and many times thereafter, God gave his servants power on the instant to talk foreign languages. Unlettered Galilean fishermen suddenly began to speak intelligently in languages that before were but meaningless jargon to them. It was manifestly a gift of God, and one instinctively shudders at the thought of one with such a gift boasting of his possession, as tho the glory of it were due to him. Very well; but “the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” *Proverbs 2:6*. If a man by study has acquired several languages, he has done it only by the power which God gave him, and therefore his knowledge is the gift of God just as truly as was the knowledge of the apostles. *SITI July 8, 1897, page 402.3*

His Keeping Power. —Whoever not simply openly, but in his inmost thoughts, continually gives God the glory, will be kept “to the praise of the glory of his grace.” “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” *Proverbs 3:6*. Men foolishly think that it is beneath their dignity, and a limitation of their freedom, to acknowledge that God alone has power, and that all glory belongs to him; but how much better it is to acknowledge the truth and thus be “strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power”

(*Colossians 1:11*), than to deny him, and thus be left to our own disgraceful impotence. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." *Jude 24, 25. E. J. W. SITI July 8, 1897, page 402.4*

July 15, 1897

“Editorial. Christ as Teacher” The Signs of the Times, 23, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Christ as Teacher. —“And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.” *John 7:31, 32.SITI July 15, 1897, page 417.1*

The trouble with the Pharisees and the chief priests was that their character and teaching suffered by comparison with that of Jesus. “Never man spake like this man,” was the testimony of the officers who were sent to seize him. “He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” The people listened to him more readily than to them, and this aroused their jealousy. And the people knew that the priests sought his life.*SITI July 15, 1897, page 417.2*

Yet the priests and rulers might have retained the confidence of the people, even in the presence of Jesus, if they had only been willing to learn of him, and accept his Spirit and the wisdom that filled him. For that, however, they were too proud, and so they took away the key of knowledge; they entered not in themselves, and those that would enter in, they hindered by every means in their power. *Luke 11:52.SITI July 15, 1897, page 417.3*

There was another reason why the wrath of the leaders of the Jews was aroused against Jesus. It was that the people who heard his living words of truth, not only lost relish for the old traditions that the elders retailed, but they actually came to know more than the leaders themselves. “If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.” The rulers were not willing to do, and therefore they did not know; while the poor people who desired to do God’s will knew the truth. David said, “I understand more than the aged, because I have kept thy precepts.” *Psalms 119:100.SITI July 15, 1897, page 417.4*

It is the earnest desire of every true teacher that the people shall learn, and the more they learn, the better he is pleased. If in time they surpass him in knowledge, then he will be but the more pleased. Even that is a testimony to the value of his teaching. This will often be the case when one leads his hearers to the Word. If he does not limit it by his own construction, but opens it, and allows the people to see for themselves, it will often be that souls will see more than he does. He who is not willing that this should happen, seeks his own glory, and not that of God; he preaches himself, and not the Word. E. J. W. *SITI July 15, 1897, page 417.5*

“Prove All Things” The Signs of the Times, 23, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” *1 Thessalonians 5:21*. A very reasonable exhortation this, and one that should commend itself to everybody’s good sense; yet few heed it, and many of those who profess to regard it misapply it. *SITI July 15, 1897, page 418.1*

How are we to prove all things? By what standard shall we test them? Here is where so many fail. Most people will use their own feelings and impulses as the standard. Their natural likes and dislikes determine what they shall hold fast and what they will reject. What they think to be good, they will follow; but since human judgment is naturally controlled or at least biased by inclination and desire, it is an unsafe guide. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” *Proverbs 16:25. SITI July 15, 1897, page 418.2*

For this reason alone, if for no other, it should be apparent to all that we are not to prove all things by sampling them. A thing may taste good, and yet contain a deadly poison. He who makes it his practice to eat everything he sees, in order to find out if it is good to eat, may have his probation cut short. It is far better to apply well-known tests for poisons, and then to eat only that which is proved to be good. *SITI July 15, 1897, page 418.3*

So in the mental and spiritual world. A man is not obliged to dabble

in every theory in order to prove it. He who thinks that he must prove every form of teaching by trying its effects on himself will fare worse than the one who tries physical poisons on himself. The system can not stand it. His nature would soon become so corrupted that he would be unable to distinguish the good, even if he got hold of it. But he would never find the good; for the forms of error are infinite, and he who sets himself to the task of investigating all error, so as to know how to avoid it, will never finish. The only thing that he will prove will be his own folly. *SITI July 15, 1897, page 418.4*

Just as there are tests for physical poisons, which can be applied without subjecting ourselves to the influence of those poisons, so we have an infallible test of truth and error. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." *Isaiah 8:20*. The Word of God is truth, and whatever is not in harmony with that is of course error. If we become thoroughly familiar with the Word, error will be revealed on its first approach, and we need have nothing whatever to do with it. The Word of the Lord is his voice, and all that is necessary is for us to know that; for we do not need to talk with a stranger hours or days in order to find out if the voice is that of our most intimate friend. *SITI July 15, 1897, page 418.5*

Least of all must it be supposed that we are to prove the Word of God itself, to see whether or not we should hold to it, or to how much we should hold fast. No; that is the standard that is already proved. "The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." *Psalms 12:6*. "Every word of God is pure." *Proverbs 30:5*. The Word itself is good; hold it fast, and prove all things by it, holding only that which the Word declares to be good. E. J. W. *SITI July 15, 1897, page 418.6*

July 22, 1897

“Editorial” The Signs of the Times, 23, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

“Himself He Can Not Save.” —When Jesus hung upon the cross, the priests and scribes and elders said in mocking contempt, “He saved others; himself he can not save.” *Matthew 27:42*. In those words there was a truth far beyond what the Jews had any thought of,—a truth that even the followers of Jesus do not appreciate. Whoever grasps the full meaning of the statement, “He saved others; himself he can not save,” and whoever allows it to apply to himself, has salvation, for it contains the whole of the Gospel.*SITI July 22, 1897, page 433.1*

“He Saved Others.” —The Jews acknowledged this, yet they crucified him. He whose only offense was that “he went about doing good,” was hanged as a malefactor, and he lifted no hand in self-defense, nor uttered a word of reproach against his persecutors.*SITI July 22, 1897, page 433.2*

“He was oppressed, and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” *Isaiah 53:7*. He saved others, and, even while hanging on the cross, “a reproach of men, and despised of the people,” he showed his power to save, in the case of the penitent thief; but himself he could not save.*SITI July 22, 1897, page 433.3*

The Secret of His Power. —This was the secret of his power to save others. It was not simply that he *would not* save himself,—not alone that he unselfishly forgot himself,—but he *could not* save himself. To have saved himself would have been the destruction of all others; for if he had planned to save himself, he would have stayed in heaven, and never exposed himself to reproach, and cruelty. But such a thing as impossible. He *could not* thus save himself, for such a saving of self would have been selfishness, and there was no selfishness in him. He absolutely could not remain in heaven and leave man to perish. But he could not save men while

keeping himself in safety apart from them and their troubles. So he “gave himself for us.” *Titus 2:14. SITI July 22, 1897, page 433.4*

The Gospel and Giving. —Thus we see that the Gospel has its origin and perfection in giving. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son.” *John 3:16*. “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,”—not to be served, but to serve—“and to give His life a ransom for many.” *Matthew 20:28*. “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that tho he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” *2 Corinthians 8:9*. He had everything, and we had nothing, so he gave up everything, and kept nothing; in order that we might have everything. *SITI July 22, 1897, page 433.5*

Emptied Himself. —Most clearly is this set forth in *Philippians 2:7*, in the rendering of the Revised Version, where we are told that when Jesus had everything, he did not count it a thing to be desired to hold it, “but emptied himself.” The Greek word from which this is translated has the sense of “to drain out.” In a sense he annihilated himself, threw himself away, in order that he might save those who were lost and in danger of annihilation. He took no thought for himself; he did not defend himself against attacks that were made upon him; utterly regardless, reckless of self, he was lost in solicitude for others. *SITI July 22, 1897, page 434.1*

The Purpose of Love. —This neglect of self was not a momentary enthusiasm, as when one under a strong impulse saves another from impending death at the expense of his own life. On the contrary, it was a deliberate, settled purpose. Calmly and deliberately, looking over the whole situation, and counting the cost, he laid down his life, that is, he placed it from him, gave it up to the service of others; and when that was done, the moment of death was but an incident in a long career of the same giving. His life was just as truly laid down for the sheep before he came to earth, and while he walked and talked and suffered in Judea and Galilee, as when with his expiring breath he cried, “Father, into thy hands I commit my Spirit.” *SITI July 22, 1897, page 434.2*

A Lesson to Us. —In all this history of self-sacrifice there is a lesson for us. We are not simply to admire the example of devotion, but to

follow it. In it alone, is there salvation. Jesus seemingly threw himself away, yea, that is what he actually did, for he “poured out his soul unto death” (*Isaiah 53:12*), “emptied himself,” drained the last drop; “wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.” *Philippians 2:9*. His humiliation was his exaltation; his casting away of self was his salvation. And that was the only possible way of salvation; for, as before stated, to have sought to save himself would have been to deny himself, that is, to prove false to his nature. Since God is love, unselfishness, the only way that he can preserve is own existence is to give himself away. *SITI July 22, 1897, page 434.3*

The Mind of Christ. —“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” *1 John 3:16*. “The brethren” for whom we are to give ourselves are the sons of Adam, for all who are children of Adam must be brethren. Of course those who give themselves for their brethren in Adam, will without question give themselves for their brethren in Christ, who himself counts even those who do not know the name of God as his brethren, saying, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren.” *Hebrews 2:12*. “We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” Let no one say or think, “My life is so commonplace and uneventful that I have no occasion to lay down my life for anybody; no great opportunities come to me.” It is not in dying on some great occasion that laying down one’s life consists, the laying down of life consists in not counting it our own, reckoning yourselves as dead, deliberately putting our life from us, and forgetting all about it in thoughts of others. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” *SITI July 22, 1897, page 434.4*

Not by Our Effort. —The lesson, in short, is that nobody can be saved by trying to be saved. Salvation is too great a thing to be accomplished by human efforts. Strange as it may seem, we can be saved only as we cease all efforts to save ourselves, and lose all thought of self in efforts to save others. Only so do we enter into full sympathy with Christ, and become laborers together with God. But that casting away of self is our salvation, for while we are concerning ourselves for others, Christ, who is also concerning himself for others, is as a matter of course caring for us. God “turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends.” *Job*

Rest and Peace. —Freedom from anxiety is thus assured to us. How easy to cast all our care upon him, when we know he cares for us! And when we know that he cares for us, what need have we to care for ourselves? Thus we experience the truth that the Lord's yoke is easy, and his burden light.*SITI July 22, 1897, page 434.6*

Debtors to All. —One thing more. Paul said, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." *Romans 1:14*. That which was true of Paul, is equally true of us. Why was he debtor?—The answer is plain, when we once stop to think; it is simply this, that Paul had received the whole of that which was given for the world. Christ gave his life for the world. He "tasted death for every man." But Christ is not divided; every soul gets the whole of him. "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." *Ephesians 4:7*. His life is light, and the light that shines for me, shines equally bright for all. He is the "Sun of Righteousness," but the sun shines for all; each one gets all the benefit of the sun, and no one could get any more, even if he were the only person on earth. So each person gets the whole of the life of Christ, which is given to the world. Now it is very evident that if I get the whole of something that is given to all the world, then I am debtor to the world; and the same is true of every soul. The only difference between the most of us and the apostle Paul is that he realized that to him was the fullness of Christ given, and he accepted and appropriated the gift, while we are too often content with but a little of the divine life. We selfishly think to take just enough for our own use, and put a part away from us, not realizing that we must have the whole; and so we fail to realize that we are debtors. May God grant that we all may have the eyes of our understanding enlightened by the Holy Spirit, so that we may know the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and may not reject that portion of the life of Christ which to the natural man seems disagreeable, but may allow his perfectly unselfish life to abide in us, so that we, not alone with our lips, but by the glad offering of ourselves for others, may truly render thanks unto God for his unspeakable gift. E. J. W.*SITI July 22, 1897, page 434.7*

July 29, 1897

“Not a Creed” The Signs of the Times, 23, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

Justification by faith, and that means salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, is not a theory. It can never be put into a creed, a form of words. Every professor of religion who has certain points of doctrine which he holds, and who is satisfied with them just as he was put them into a form of statement, has as iron-bound a creed as any ever imposed by a council. *SITI July 29, 1897, page 450.1*

But the truth of God is ever growing, ever enlarging. “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (*Proverbs 4:18*), and we can not put that light into writing, and say, “This is the sum of the doctrine.” We may speak what we know, and write what we know, but this simply calls attention to the truth; there is more and more. There are oceans of light and truth, wonderful revelations that the Lord will make to every soul, beyond what he has ever seen, in the treasures of the grace of Christ, if he will but give up to the Lord continually, for him to live his own marvelous life in him. Continually should the prayer be made, “open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Every wonderful thing that we see is but the forerunner of a still more wonderful thing to be revealed, if we will but be open to receive it. *SITI July 29, 1897, page 450.2*

But the man not content with God’s words, who will not rest until he has defined doctrine by his own words and put God into a formula, shuts himself away from learning of God. E. J. W. *SITI July 29, 1897, page 450.3*

August 12, 1897

“Editorial. The Wisdom of Jesus” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

The Wisdom of Jesus. —“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.... And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.” *Luke 2:40-47. SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.1*

Of one thing each reader of this narrative should rest assured from the very beginning, and that is that Jesus was not as we sometimes see it stated, “disputing with the doctors.” He was not doing anything that would be unbecoming in a child of twelve years. He was not putting himself forward, nor “showing off.” He was not presuming to teach those learned doctors of the law, nor showing the least disrespect to them. He was listening to their instruction, and asking them questions on what they were teaching, just as every listener was expected to do. He was seeking knowledge; more wisdom may sometimes be revealed in the questions of a learner than in the instruction of a teacher. The questions of the child Jesus, asked for the purpose of gaining information, showed that he already had a marvelous perception and grasp of truth, greater perhaps than had the doctors. *SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.2*

Later in life, when he was engaged in public labor, “the multitudes were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.” *Matthew 7:28, 29, R.V.* “And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagog, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence

hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?" *Matthew 13:34.SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.3*

The true answer to this question is scarcely understood even by the followers of Jesus. If it were, there would be more of the same wisdom among them; for just as truly as Christ "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men" (*Philippians 2:7, R.V.*), so then "it behooved him be made like unto his brethren" (*Hebrews 2:17*), so truly did he possess no advantages over his brethren, and had access to no sources of wisdom that are not open to all.*SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.4*

Made in all things like unto his brethren. —The common idea concerning Jesus is that he was born with special wisdom, and as an infant he possessed knowledge superior to that of most men, and that he did not need to learn as other folks do, but that his wisdom was inherited, so that he knew everything without any effort. Such an idea not only makes him a monstrosity, but it places a great gulf between him and us, so that we have nothing in common with him, and derive no help from him. All our hope and consolation in Jesus rest in the fact that, as partaker of flesh and blood, he was subject to the same infirmities that we are, as weak and helpless in himself as we are, yet without sin, and by the divine life dwelling in him made "Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." He came to earth to let men know what God can do in human flesh; and just to the extent that we imagine him to have "natural" abilities superior to ours, do we deprive ourselves of the grace that is brought to us in him.*SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.5*

The fact that Jesus was not born with greater knowledge than possessed by other infants, is indicated by the statement that he "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." *Luke 2:52*. It would have been as incongruous for him to be born with perfect wisdom as to be born with full stature. He increased in wisdom as he grew in age and stature, just as other children are expected to.*SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.6*

In the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah we have the Lord's own statement of how he obtained the wisdom that made him the greatest Teacher the world has ever seen. That this chapter contains the words of the

Lord Jesus is shown by *verse 6*, “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” Now read *verse 4* (R. V.): “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should know how to sustain with words him that is weary; he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as they that are taught,” or “as disciples,” Christ was himself a disciple, a learner from the Father, thus showing that only they who are learners can be apt teachers.*SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.7*

Jesus made no claims to be the possessor of special gifts. He said: “I can of mine own self do nothing.” *John 3:30*. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.” *Verse 19*. These are not the expressions of false modesty, for Jesus spoke only truth, as he is the Truth; therefore as no man can be any weaker than not to be able to do anything of himself, or more ignorant than to know anything without being taught, even so there is no person in the world who does not possess the same advantages that Jesus did.*SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.8*

Hear him again: “Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as *my Father hath taught me*, I speak these things.” *John 8:28*. To Moses God had said concerning Jesus, “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.”*SITI August 12, 1897, page 481.9*

The Promises to All Believers. —All this is promised to all believers as well as to Jesus. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” *James 1:5*. To “the captive exile” the Lord says, “I have put my words in thy mouth.” *Isaiah 51:14-16*, R.V. As “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,” even so he has “placed in us the word of reconciliation,” so that he beseeches by us. *2 Corinthians 5:19, 20*. If it is given to us to pray “in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God,” then of course the same grace, and the same gifts by grace, are bestowed upon us that were bestowed upon him. “Unto every one of us is given grace according to the

measure of the gift of Christ.” *Ephesians 4:7.SITI August 12, 1897, page 482.1*

All this knowledge of Jesus came solely from the Word of God, through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. He asked wisdom and received it, just as we may. But we must not suppose that we are to ask for wisdom, and then go to sleep and wake up wise. We are to ask in faith, and that means according to God’s promise, which is this: “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” “Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.” *Proverbs 2:1-6, 9.SITI August 12, 1897, page 482.2*

To the simple, even to fools and scorers, God says, “Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.” *Proverbs 1:23.* Jesus needed no reproof, for he did not turn aside from the way. He said, “An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him; and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.” *Psalms 41:8.* We have sinned, as he did not; but if we will turn at the reproof of the Lord, he will make known to us the same words of wisdom that he did to Christ; for Christ is made unto us wisdom, as well as righteousness.” *1 Corinthians 1:30.SITI August 12, 1897, page 482.3*

How little we have realized the wonderful depths and heights and breadth of wisdom that is contained in the Word of God, to be freely bestowed on all who will humbly, patiently, and prayerfully study them. Both Solomon and he who is “greater than Solomon” derived all their wisdom from this source alone, as we have learned by the inspired testimony of Solomon. God, who through Solomon said, “My son, if thou wilt receive my words,” “then shalt thou understand,” was speaking to his Son Jesus, and also to us, whom he accepts as sons equally with Jesus. Jesus listened and learned. He says, “The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not

rebellious, neither turned away back.” *Isaiah 30:3*. He has said to us that if any man willeth to do his will, he shall also know. *John 7:17*. *SITI August 12, 1897, page 482.4*

This wonderful knowledge is not hidden from children. Nay, the things that are hidden from the worldly wise and prudent are revealed unto babes. “I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients,”—the old men,—“because I keep thy precepts.” *Psalms 119:99, 100*. This is not to the praise of the child, but of the Word, which any child, as well as Timothy and Jesus, may know. *SITI August 12, 1897, page 482.5*

One thing must not be forgotten, and that is that such wisdom accompanies only true humility. The simplicity of real childhood must be maintained. We must always, even with the knowledge which the Word gives, confess that we know nothing except as we are taught. Natural pride, stubbornness, unwillingness to acknowledge that we have nothing and are nothing, are the hindrances to the acquirement of true knowledge; but we have the assurance that the same God whose power bestows upon us the wisdom of Christ is able also to give us his meekness. Let us then be not rebellious, but submissive to the Word of wisdom. E. J. W. *SITI August 12, 1897, page 482.6*

August 26, 1897

“Editorial. Independence” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Independence. —The feeling of independence is inherent in human nature. The first declaration of independence against God was made by Lucifer, in the courts of heaven, and next, at his instigation, by man in the Garden of Eden, when he set about to make himself equal to God, and thus independent of his authority. The first marked feature to manifest itself in the infant is the disposition to have its own way; and unless this disposition is checked, it grows stronger with years until even in early youth he declares his determination to have his own way, regardless of what anybody else may say or think. *SITI August 26, 1897, page 513.1*

Who Shall Rule? —This is easily answered in the case of the infant. That the child is of right subject to the parent, is so self-evident as to need no special argument. The child is *not* independent of its parents. Why not?—Simply because *it is not*. It can not be. It depends upon them for existence in this world, and after it sees the light of day it is as dependent as before. It is absolutely impossible for it to maintain an independent existence. If forsaken by its mother, and left with no one else to take her place, it would perish in a very short time. For years the child is the most helpless of animals; it is absolutely dependent on the exertions of others for its existence. Then of course it must be subject to those who provide for it, because—*SITI August 26, 1897, page 513.2*

Dependence Means Subjection. —He who provides a thing has a right to say how that thing shall be used. To partake of one's bounty,—to be absolutely dependent,—and at the same time to rail against him, and to use all one's power against him, is the basest ingratitude. Whoever does that is by common consent regarded as lost to all sense of justice. So long as one is absolutely dependent on another, that other must of right have the controlling voice in the dependent one's affairs. *SITI August 26, 1897, page 513.3*

Who Is Independent? —Who is there that is indebted to no one for

his existence?—Not one; as already seen, every child is of right subject to its parents. But the parents themselves,—whence to they derive their support, their life itself?—“God that made the world and all things therein, ... giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; ... for in him we live, and move, and have our being.” *Acts 25:24-28*. The parents of every child, yea, every person in the world, are as absolutely dependent on God for existence and its continuation, as the infant is upon its parents. The strongest and wisest man in the world is far more helpless compared with God, than the newborn infant is compared with him. When Peter stepped out upon the water at the word of Jesus, he was conscious of the fact that he was dependent upon Jesus for support. But he was just as much dependent on that support when walking on the land. *SITI August 26, 1897, page 513.4*

God the One Ruler. —Those who are nearest to God, beholding his power and glory, and who themselves occupy the highest position of all created beings, do humble reverence to God, saying, “Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power; for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created.” *Revelation 4:11*, R.V. “Know ye that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” *Psalms 100:3*. Therefore, just as the child is of right subject to his parents, because dependent on them for existence, so all men are of right subject to God, absolutely dependent on him for life, and breath, and all things; and this is the very lesson that God would have both parents and children (and that includes everybody) learn from the relation of parent and child. The child is dependent on its parents, in order that both it and they may see their common dependence upon God; and the child is by the nature of things compelled to be dependent on its parents until it comes to years of discretion, in order that, in the proper order of things, it may learn the lesson of dependence, and pass from the recognition of dependence upon its parents to the recognition of its dependence upon God; nay, more, long before it ceases to be dependent upon its parents, it should learn the lesson that it is subject to them, for the reason that all are subject to God. *SITI August 26, 1897, page 513.5*

The Responsibility of the Independent One. —We speak now of the

one who chafes under proper restraint, and who imagines himself to be independent, for God alone is independent. Well, since God alone is independent, from him alone may we learn the responsibility that one really assumes when he asserts his independence. God is self-existent; his name is I AM; no other being in the universe contributes the slightest particle to his support. Therefore he has a right to do as he will, and none can question him and say, "What doest thou?" "Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (*Psalm 15:3*); and none have ever been able to withstand him; "For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" He who would stay the Lord in any of his purposes, must be one who has first given to him; but there are none such. *SITI August 26, 1897, page 514.1*

What It Means. —The one therefore who assumes that he is independent, and who asserts his independence, takes upon himself the responsibility of maintaining his own existence. When the headstrong youth declares his independence of his father's control, the father sometimes allows him to carry his declaration to its legitimate conclusion, and attempt to provide for his own support. Now it may be that the youth from that time is able to live without his father, although but for his previous dependence he could not now be seemingly independent, but it is impossible for him to be independent of God. He goes out into the world in his boastful pride, declaring himself to be independent even of God. He blasphemes the name of God. He will not be dependent on any being, not he. But wait! He is breathing, yes, even breathing out defiance to God. Where did you get your breath, my friend? Did you make it?—No, you didn't have anything to do with it. "You found it ready made and used it, and the supply is kept up while you are asleep. Now, no matter who made it, it is certain that you did not, and therefore if you are determined to be independent, you must at once cease using it. Of course no other man made it, any more than you did; God alone made it. Now the only way for you to be independent of God is for you to provide your own air, and use no other. Everybody who declares independence against God, puts himself under obligation to make his own air. You can not do it?—No, of course you can not. If you cease using God's air you will immediately die. Whose life are you using, then?—Why, God's and

his only. Certainly then it is nothing more than common fairness that he be allowed to direct his own life. Every man who breathes is by that very act under obligation to devote his life to the Lord, for him to control. *SITI August 26, 1897, page 514.2*

“His Mercy Endureth Forever.” —We have said that sometimes an earthly father tells his rebellious sons that he may look out for himself if he will not acknowledge parental authority; but this God does not do. “His mercy endureth forever.” “He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” *Matthew 5:43*. “He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.” *Luke 6:35*. This is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance. If men would only acknowledge the truth that is evident in every breath they breathe, the very drawing of their breath would draw them to God. How easy is it to believe God?—Just as easy as it is to breathe. Then “let everything that hath breath praise the Lord,” and thus prepare the way for God to show them his salvation. E. J. W. *SITI August 26, 1897, page 514.3*

“Discovering Truth” The Signs of the Times, 23, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Discovering Truth. —The astronomer does not make the celestial bodies which his telescope reveals; they were in existence before he saw them, and all that he has done is to look steadily and patiently at some particular portion of the heavens, until the new light suddenly dawned upon his vision. Even so with a man searching for hid treasure or for something that is lost. He digs faithfully, or patiently searches for it, until he finds it; but when he has found it, he can not take any credit to himself for its existence. He did not manufacture it; he simply had the patience to keep looking until he found the right place, or till his eyes became accustomed to the light, and could distinguish objects. Then he had only to look and see that which was plainly visible. It is exactly the same way in the study of divine truth. Truth and wisdom come from God alone. He is the author of truth, because he is the truth. No man can manufacture or invent truth, for it exists from eternity. All that anybody can do is to open his eyes and see it. One reason why more people do not know and have the truth is that they think that

to acquire it requires special qualifications and a sort of genius, whereas all that is necessary is open eyes. The natural man wishes to “work out” theories, so that he may have the credit of being wonderfully clever; but truth comes only to him who acknowledges his ignorance, and does not desire to gain applause for wisdom which does not and can not originate with him. If our sight is defective, we have only to pray to the Lord to anoint our eyes with eyesalve, and open them, that we may behold wonderful things in his law. *Revelation 3:15; Psalm 119:18*. E. J. W.*SITI August 26, 1897, page 3.1*

“Inciting to War” The Signs of the Times, 23, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Inciting to War. —It does not augur well for the prospects of peace, when leading church teachers declare that the three conditions of justifiable warfare are,—the command of the prince, a just cause, and a good intention—and that the first cause “relieves the individual soldier from all moral responsibility for his military action,” that “it is lawful for Christian men at the command of the magistrate to wear weapons and to serve in the wars;” and, even worse still, that “in war men have the opportunity of rising to higher levels of virtue than they would have thought possible of attainment.” Such teaching is not calculated to make men acquainted with God as the One who “maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth.” He who “hath the power of death, that is, the devil,” has, by means of his skill in passing himself off as an angel of light, attained to a very prominent position as a religious teacher, so that counsels of war and death are largely supposed to be a part of the Gospel of life and peace. E. J. W.*SITI August 26, 1897, page 3.2*

September 2, 1897

“Editorial. A Lesson in Ruling” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

“Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, tho thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel.” *Micah 5:2.SITI September 2, 1897, page 1.1*

Compare this with *Matthew 2:6*, where it is quoted, and note the margin, which is closer to the original: “Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall feed my people Israel.”*SITI September 2, 1897, page 1.2*

This is the Holy Spirit’s own definition of the work of a true ruler or governor. We find it not in the nations of earth, nor in the apostate church, where the princes of the people “exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them,” but we do find it amongst the real followers of Christ; where greatness is according to the amount of service.*SITI September 2, 1897, page 1.3*

The Danish Version, following the original *Matthew 2:6* more closely than the English, has it: “Out of thee shall go a Prince who shall be My people Israel’s Shepherd.” This agrees with the marginal reading of our common version, for the duty of a shepherd is to feed the flock. But mark this, that the Ruler of Israel is the Shepherd of Israel: His work as Ruler of the people is to feed them.*SITI September 2, 1897, page 1.4*

See how beautifully this thought of a Shepherd-King is expressed in *Isaiah 40:10, 11*: “Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”*SITI September 2, 1897, page 1.5*

This is the only kind of ruling that the Lord sanctions in his church. In *Hebrews 13:17* we read the exhortation, “Obey them that have the rule over you,” but here again we may learn from the margin that these “rulers” are guides—those who direct the people in the right way, as a shepherd. Christ is “the Prince of princes,” the Ruler over all; he leads his people, however, and does not drive them. He leads them where they will find food and safety. *SITI September 2, 1897, page 1.6*

This thought is emphasized by the fact that Christ as Ruler comes out of Bethlehem. Bethlehem, literally, is the “House of Bethel.” Out of the house of bread comes the Ruler, whose work is to feed the people. How significant! More than this, he himself is the bread of life. In the house of God there is always an abundance of “the hidden manna,” enough and to spare. Here is a lesson for all who are in positions of authority in the church. Their work is to take the bread of life from the house of bread, to feed upon it themselves, and then feed the people with it. When they do this, their authority will be recognized by the people, even if questioned by the scribes and Pharisees. E. J. W. *SITI September 2, 1897, page 1.7*

September 9, 1897

“Editorial. The Light of the World” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

“And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.” And Jesus said, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.” *John 9:1-7. SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.1*

In this simple story we learn how literally true are the words of Jesus, “I am the light of the world.” Here was a poor man who in the midst of light was walking in darkness. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world,” and immediately gave the man sight. It is very evident that the poor man was wholly dependent on Jesus and his word for his sight. Jesus was literally to him the light of day. *SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.2*

But that case is only illustrative. What Jesus was to that man, he is to all. He is literally the light of the world. “All things were made by him” (*John 1:3*), and “by him all things consist” (*Colossians 1:17*). God has set his glory upon the heavens. *Psalms 8:1*, R.V. The light of which the sun was made bearer, is nothing less than “the light of the glory of God.” All the light of this world came from the word of God, who said, “Let there be light,” and “there was light.” *SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.3*

It was this same word that gave light to the poor, blind man. There was no healing virtue in the clay, nor in the water; but the man obeyed the command, “Go and wash,” and in those words of Jesus he found the light. Thus he found that the words, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,” are most strictly and literally true. He who follows Christ can not walk in darkness, because he has the light of life. *John 8:12. SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.4*

The man upon whom this miracle was wrought was only a poor beggar, who until that day had never seen the light, yet as soon as the miracle was performed, he had more true knowledge of the light than all the learned Pharisees and doctors of the law had. Note his clear and decisive answers under cross-questioning. When there was a doubt expressed as to his being the same blind man who begged by the wayside, he settled that question by saying, "I am he." He was not ashamed to acknowledge his low degree.*SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.5*

Neither was he ashamed to acknowledge his dependence upon Jesus for his sight. On being asked how his eyes were opened, he said, "A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight." It was a simple testimony to the truth, and therein lay its convincing power. The most learned man in the city could not have told it any better.*SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.6*

Then there was a dispute as to the character of Jesus. First he bluntly declared, "He is a prophet." Note that he did not give it as his opinion or belief, but as a fact that admitted of no dispute. In his simplicity he did not presume to advance theories, but stuck to what he knew, and that was far better than theories. If professed Christians, and Christian teachers, were better acquainted with the practical facts of the Gospel, there would be far less groping among systems of theories.*SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.7*

Further than these simple facts, the young man would not allow himself to be enticed. To the Pharisees' declaration that Christ was a sinner, he replied, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." That was a fact which the Pharisees would gladly forget, but the young man held them to it; and it really settled the whole question. For to give sight to a man born blind, was a creative act, and showed divine power. That being admitted, there could be no further question as to the character of Jesus.*SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.8*

The result was characteristic. The Pharisees could not gainsay the facts so simply yet graphically told by the young man, but they were

bound not to accept the light that had so brightly dawned upon him, and so they said, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" and they cast him out of the synagog. When men meet facts which they can not overthrow and will not accept, they betray their confusion by appealing to their age, or their position, or their learning.*SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.9*

But the great lesson for us to learn is the reality of the light which God gives by his Word, and the positive assurance with which those must speak who have received that light. If all the philosophers in the world should unite to demonstrate that the sun is an opaque body, and that we actually receive no light from it, the most ignorant man in the street could say, "I don't know anything about your science, but I know I see;" and with that fact he could overturn all their theories. So the simple man whose eyes are opened to see "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ," can silence every learned objection with the simple declaration, "I was blind; now I see." Doubtless few will accept the truth through his simple testimony; but he may be sure that those who will not accept it on such evidence, would not accept it under any circumstances. One thing that an unlearned man knows is worth more than ten million things that wise men do not know. E. J. W.*SITI September 9, 1897, page 545.10*

"Shutting in the Light" The Signs of the Times, 23, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

Shutting in the Light. —The sun has risen, and is beginning to flood our room with light. Brighter and brighter the light shines, as the sun ascends in the heavens. "Ah, now we have light enough; that is quite sufficient; we shall not need any more! We will therefore now close the shutters tightly, so that we may prevent any more light from coming in, and keep only that which we now have." This we forthwith do, but, behold, it is perfectly dark! The light that we had went out as soon as we shut out the light that was streaming in. So we find that it is impossible to retain the light that we now have, unless we allow the light to continue to come in freely. How many are forgetting the obvious fact, content to have no more light, and even strenuously resisting its entrance! Let such remember that

they are in the way of making the light that is in them become darkness. E. J. W. *SITI* September 9, 1897, page 546.1

September 16, 1897

“Disgrace and Accusation” The Signs of the Times, 23, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Disgrace and Accusation.— The only disgrace that can come to any man in this world is the commission of sin. It is not the exposure and punishment of crime, but the crime itself, whether known or not, that constitutes the disgrace. Therefore the fact that a man has committed gross sin, is not necessarily a disgrace to him. That depends wholly upon whether or not he has repented of the sin. If he holds to the sin, the disgrace still clings to him; if he has repented, the disgrace is removed; because the grace of God removes the sin of him who repents, and where the grace of God abounds, there can be no disgrace. This is self-evident. This shows that there is no disgrace to the repentant sinner in the fact that people who do not know the grace of God still remember his previous misdeeds, and despise him. It is not what others think of us, but what we are, that determines whether or not we suffer disgrace. And so it is no disgrace for a man to be unjustly suspected or accused. The disgrace rests upon the false accusers alone. Many people will say, even after a falsely-accused person is proved to be innocent, “There must be something wrong that gave rise to the suspicion.” Such persons should remember that Christ, “who knew no sin,” was accused of the grossest misdeeds. He himself has said, “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.” E. J. W. *SITI September 16, 1897, page 564.1*

“Fulness of Joy” The Signs of the Times, 23, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

“These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” *John 15:11*. There is something wonderful in these words, especially when we consider the circumstances under which they were spoken. “These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you.” That shows us that by receiving and retaining what Jesus says to us, we

receive and retain his joy. Joy comes by believing the words of the Lord, as we read, “The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.” *Romans 15:13*. Notice, it is “all joy” in believing, just as Jesus says: “that your joy may be *full*.” By receiving his words we get fullness of joy-perfect joy. *SITI September 16, 1897, page 564.2*

But that shows us also that he had perfect joy-fullness of joy; for it is *his* joy that we are to receive. “These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” We get fullness of joy through Jesus, simply because his joy is perfect. As men sometimes express it, his cup of joy was full. When was it that he expressed the wish that his perfect joy might remain in his disciples?—The very night when he was betrayed; while he was on the way to the place where he knew that he would be delivered into the hands of cruel men, to be mocked, and beaten, and scourged, and crucified. Ah, that is joy worth having,—a joy that is perfect in distress and affliction, a joy that is perfect in itself, and does not depend on circumstances! It is the possession of such joy, and that alone, that enables one to endure affliction. Jesus, because of the joy that he had continually before him, and present with him, “endured the cross, despising the shame.” *Hebrews 12:2. SITI September 16, 1897, page 564.3*

This joy is found, not in doubting, not in experimenting, but in trusting. There are millionaires that would give all their possessions for such joy, that delivers from painful anxiety, when the poorest man can have it by simply taking the words of the Lord and letting them work out their fulfilment in him. How can Christians be otherwise than glad, when they serve a Master who is gladness itself? E. J. W. *SITI September 16, 1897, page 564.4*

September 23, 1897

“Asking and Receiving” The Signs of the Times, 23, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth.” *Matthew 8:7, 8*. If we seek, with this assurance, it is worth while to know what to seek, what it is that is worth the finding. The same One who gives the assurance that we shall find, tells us what to seek: “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.” *Isaiah 55:6*. “Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore.” *Psalms 105:4*. *SITI September 23, 1897, page 579.1*

Here is something that is certainly worth finding. If we find the Lord, we find his strength. He is the Almighty, therefore whoever finds him becomes “strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.” *Colossians 1:11*. In his presence is fullness of joy. Not only so, but “in him all things consist” (*Colossians 1:17*, R.V.), and therefore he who finds the Lord has with him all things (*Romans 8:23*). *SITI September 23, 1897, page 579.2*

But is the Lord, with all this treasure, hard to find? Nay, quite the contrary; “he that seeketh, findeth,” because he is not far from every one of us. *Acts 17:27*. More than this, he is seeking us: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” *Luke 19:10*. Since he is seeking us, what can possibly hinder us from finding him, if we also seek him? Each seeking the other, we are sure to come together. *SITI September 23, 1897, page 579.3*

The statement that the Lord came to seek the lost, points to the fact that man was once with him, but wandered away. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” *Isaiah 53:6*. When people sin, they imagine that God is angry with them, and that he has turned away from them. Not so; it is they who turn away and hide from him, while he seeks them. Adam and Eve, after their sin, “hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.” *Genesis 3:8*. But the Lord did not

hide from them; on the contrary, he sought them, and when they responded to his call, they found each other. *SITI September 23, 1897, page 580.1*

Therefore, since it is we who “hid as it were our faces from him” (*Isaiah 53:3*), and he is all the time seeking us, it is evident that all we have to do to seek and find him is to turn round and look up. How easy the way, and how blessed the result! Let each one, then make these words his own: “When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek,” assured that the finding will be sure, speedy, and glorious. E. J. W. *SITI September 23, 1897, page 580.2*

September 30, 1897

“Editorial. The Great Sacrifice” The Signs of the Times, 23, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

The Great Sacrifice. —The great Sacrifice of divine love was not an after thought, coming in after man sinned. It was not a new device to meet an exigency. There are no surprises to Him who is infinite in knowledge and wisdom. Jesus Christ was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” *Revelation 13:8.SITI September 30, 1897, page 593.1*

Character a Matter of Choice. —In the very plan of God the possibility (not the necessity) of sin was involved. That creature enjoying the greatest bliss must obtain it by choice; he must be free because he chooses freedom. That which man is *compelled* to do brings him little joy. The chafing chain of compulsion destroys all the pleasures of what if of choice would be a delightful occupation. The only pleasure sin ever brings, evanescent as it is, comes because men choose it; and the pleasure which comes from choosing good and doing good is as much greater and higher as eternity is more than time. God therefore gave to man free choice, with the possibility of sin. But God set before man the end of the evil way, and the eternal fruitage of good, desiring him to choose the good way and making it possible for every one so to do.*SITI September 30, 1897, page 593.2*

Man’s Choice. —Man’s choice was evil. He walked by sight not by faith. God’s way was in his Word. He warned man, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” *Genesis 2:17*. Faith is based on God’s Word. *Romans 10:17*. But man “saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes,” he chose the way of sight, and sinned, and died. *Genesis 3:6*. Choosing by sight was the way of temporary pleasure and selfishness, the very way in which millions barter eternal life and bliss. Choosing by faith in God’s Word, it would have forever led man out toward God, like whom he would have continued to grow. Infinite Love gave to man the way of faith, that it might be the way of infinite blessing.*SITI September 30, 1897, page 593.3*

Love's Infinite Gift. —Yet, knowing that man would sin, God provided (not for the sin) but salvation from the sin. He gave his only-begotten Son. Not eighteen centuries ago did he give him, but he “verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.” *1 Peter 1:20*. The gift was made-God gave his Son (*John 3:16*), that Son “gave himself” (*Titus 2:14*)-in the beginning, the gift of God’s infinite love. As that gift involved the very Godhead, the person of him who with the Father made the worlds, all the purposes of God are found in him. With respect to that great center of love and power has all the plan of God through all the ages been wrought out. Every sacrifice ordained of God was efficacious only as it expressed faith in God’s great sacrifice of his Son. Every kid, every lamb, every offering of first-fruits, every one of the first-born, pointed to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. *John 1:29. SITI September 30, 1897, page 593.4*

“Manifest in These Last Times.” —The Sacrifice was eternal; its greatest manifestation was when Jesus Christ was given into the hands of the powers of darkness, condemned without a trial, mocked and scourged, and crowned with thorns, made to bear the instrument of his own suffering till bodily strength failed from sheer exhaustion, and then nailed to the cruel tree. During all this time mindful only of others, admonishing the women of Jerusalem that were weeping for him, gently reproving Peter with a look, placing his mother in the care of a loved disciple, praying for those who tortured him, and comforting the repentant criminal at his side-was there ever sacrifice and love like this? The cross was the climax of the manifestation of his suffering; but he suffers still. He was a present Saviour to Abel, to John who stood beside the cross, to us who live in the nineteenth century. For as truly as to the Gauls of old, so to us, before our eyes, “Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified *among you*.” *Galatians 3:1*. His death is for us to-day. Our sins are to-day laid upon him that we may sin no more. *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.1*

An Eternal Sacrifice. —His is not a sacrifice of a day, or for three and one-half years, or for thirty-four years; it is an eternal sacrifice. When he left heaven’s glory, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, he became one of

us, a “brother in adversity;” and when he ascended, we triumphed with him; but he is one with us still; and forever is he one with us—God, yet man—a brother to all men, for all eternity. And the pain is not over yet. He is touched with the feeling of all our infirmities, suffers with his body, the church, a crucified yet risen Saviour. What love is this? As he has made the eternal sacrifice for you, O soul, will you not yield yourself, your all, to him, “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” *Romans 12:1*. There is cleansing, there is blessing, there is power and life and salvation in Jesus Christ, even “to the uttermost.” *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.2*

Taste and See. —One of my friends offers me some food which he says is very good and nourishing, and asks me to adopt it as an article of diet. But I am skeptical, and do not believe that it is good, and so I say, “Prove to me that it is good, and I will take it.” “That I can not do,” he replies: “I know it is good, and can assure you of the fact; but you must prove it for yourself; taste it, and you will know it too.” Well, that is certainly reasonable; for I can’t expect to know that a thing is good, unless I taste for myself. Even so, when my friend does not believe me when I tell him that the Lord is good, and asks me to prove it to him. I can not; I know that he is good, for I have tried him; I can assure others of his goodness, but I can not prove it to them. I can only say, “O taste and see that the Lord is good.” Why will not people be as reasonable in regard to spiritual food as with the mere physical? Taste, and you have the proof. E. J. W. *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.3*

“Imagining Difficulties” The Signs of the Times, 23, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

“O, I can’t sleep at night, I can’t sleep!” *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.4*

“Poor fellow, you must cease your overwork, and at once make use of soothing remedies!” *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.5*

“O, that will do no good; the trouble is not with me; I could sleep well if I had an opportunity, but there is no time in which to sleep; I

can never sleep any more!" *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.6*

"Why not? How can that be?" *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.7*

"I have just learned that the earth is round, and that it isn't night at all places on the earth at the same time, and that therefore it is impossible for people to sleep." *SITI September 30, 1897, page 594.8*

"Foolish fellow! Who has been telling you that?" *SITI September 30, 1897, page 595.1*

"Nobody; but my pastor, who is a learned man, has told me that it is impossible to keep the seventh-day Sabbath, because it is not the seventh day all over the world at one time; and I have sense enough to see that if we can't rest on the seventh day, then we can't sleep on the seventh night; and if we can't sleep on the seventh night, we can't sleep on any other night. What shall I do?" *SITI September 30, 1897, page 595.2*

"Do! why, go to bed to-night, when the night comes to you, and sleep where you are, instead of thinking you must sleep where you are not. Didn't you sleep well last night?" *SITI September 30, 1897, page 595.3*

"First-rate: never slept better in my life; but then you see I had not heard the parson's theory." *SITI September 30, 1897, page 595.4*

"Well, don't let a theory run away with the fact. The fact is, you can and do sleep every night when it comes to you; when the night is on the other side of the earth, you do not need to sleep. So with the Sabbath-the seventh day-which God made for man-for all men-to keep. Keep it when it comes to you; when it is not present with you, then you are not required to rest on it. Let your soul rest in the assurance that God has never given a commandment that it is not possible for all men everywhere to obey." E. J. W. *SITI September 30, 1897, page 595.5*

October 7, 1897

“One Sure Thing” The Signs of the Times, 23, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

In the book of Proverbs much is said about surety, and people are more than once warned against going surety, not only for a stranger, but even for a friend. In the eleventh chapter, *verse 15*, we read, “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure.” In the margin we have in the place of “suretyship,” “those that strike hands.” That is, a man can not be safe unless he refrains from giving his hand as surety for another. *SITI October 7, 1897, page 2.1*

But read further, and see what is said in the twenty-first verse: “*Tho* hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished; but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.” Notice that the words “*tho*” and “*join*” are in *Italic* type, indicating that they are not in the Hebrew. The literal Hebrew, as indicated in the margin of the Revised Version, is “hand in hand.” Here, then, we find an instance of giving the hand, or, as rendered, “My hand upon it,” in two translations before me, I read, “One can give his hand for it, that the wicked shall not be unpunished, but the seed of the righteous shall escape.” So sure is it that God will see that justice has its due! Men are often tempted to think, as did David, that the wicked have the best of it, and that in unrighteousness is the most prosperity to be found; but let no one be deceived in this matter. So sure is it that wickedness will be punished, and that the reward of the righteous will not be forgotten, that one may safely give his hand upon it, and be a surety for it. It is the only sure thing in this world. E. J. W. *SITI October 7, 1897, page 2.2*

October 14, 1897

“His Saving Knowledge” The Signs of the Times, 23, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

“For the Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” *Hebrews 4:12, 13, R.V. SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.1*

To the soul that does not know the Lord, this is one of the most terrible texts in the Bible. Since the day when Adam and Eve hid themselves among the trees of the garden, the consciousness of guilt has ever tended to make men afraid of God. The natural inclination of the sinner is to try to hide from God; he can not bear to have his misdeeds laid bare before the eyes of spotless purity. So the words, “all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do,” and, “Thou understandest my thought afar off,” are words that strike terror to the heart of the ungodly. So the natural man tries to forget the fact,—tries to forget his own sins,—foolishly imagining that his ignorance, or forgetfulness, or unbelief, hides the matter from the eyes of God. *SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.2*

But it is impossible to hide from God, for he is everywhere, filling all space. “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.” *Psalms 139:7-10*. This being the case, the best thing for men to do is to face the fact, and find the comfort that there is in it, instead of following the devil’s promptings, and endeavoring to hide from him who is love, “the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.” *2 Corinthians 1:3. SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.3*

How is it that God knows all things? Is it by searching into the secret things, so that by study he arrives at knowledge that he did not possess before?—Impossible! for that would argue imperfection on his part. We may not seek to understand God's capacities by a comparison with man. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." God himself is everywhere, the direct source of all life. Wherever there is life, wherever there is a created thing to be maintained in existence, there God is, and wherever God is there is all wisdom.*SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.4*

Notice that the Word of God pierces the joints and marrow, and soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This is a natural consequence of the fact that "the Word was made flesh." *John 1:14*. God in Christ has forever identified himself with humanity. When Adam stood in innocence and uprightness, it was only by the indwelling Word, upon which he wholly depended. When he forgot his dependence, and struck out for himself, and thus fell, God did not forsake him, but descended to the depths with him, that he might lift him out again. So God is "not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being." *Acts 17:27, 28*. When men would seek to justify themselves for not obeying the commandments of God, by professing ignorance of them, the Spirit says to them: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead);" for "the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." *Romans 10:6-8*. Christ, "the wisdom of God," knows the sins of mankind, because "he *is come* in the flesh." He bears the sins of the world, because the Lord has laid upon him the iniquities of us all. *Isaiah 53:6*. He knows them, because nothing can be done that does not touch him; no motion can be made without the power that comes alone from the Word. This is the true "Real Presence."*SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.5*

How utterly useless, then, to think of hiding our sins from the Lord! We might as well try to hide from the Lord the knowledge of his own existence. Every one of those sins is stamped upon his being. They pierce his brow, his hands, his feet, even his heart, and press upon him so that "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his

form more than the sons of men.” *Isaiah 52:14*. He must know, for every sin touches its own life. *SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.6*

And herein is the comfort to us in the thought of God’s knowledge of mankind. “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” *Isaiah 53:11*. He knows our sins, because he experiences their power, and by that knowledge he justifies many. How many?—As many as believe on him, as many as confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” *Romans 10:9, 13. SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.7*

Christ bears the burden of the world’s guilt, and bears it easily. Our sin crushes us, and presses us down to destruction; but he swallows up death in victory. Tho sin crush out his life, yet he rises from the dead with the freshness of eternal life. Whoever knows this, and believes the truth, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, will of course let the burden fall entirely on him who is able to bear it, and will thus be free. *SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.8*

So when we confess sin to God, we are not telling him any news. We are simply agreeing with his Word. He knew it all before, but he wishes us to be confidential with him. He is a faithful Friend, and will not betray our secrets. On the contrary, he will himself forget our misdeeds, blotting them out of existence, so that even our adversary, the devil, can not find them, to taunt us with them. The only way to hide them from the world, is to tell them to God. *SITI October 14, 1897, page 2.9*

What a blessing and comfort, then, to know that God knows! “He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.” And he cares too. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” And, what is more, he is able to carry the burden for us, and give us peace and rest. “Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.” Therefore unto him that is able to keep us from falling, who is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,” to him who knows our sins, who pities our weakness, and who is mighty to save by his

love and wisdom-to him be glory and praise forever and ever. E. J.
W.*SITI* October 14, 1897, page 3.1

October 28, 1897

“How to Love God” The Signs of the Times, 23, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

“I do not love God, and it does not seem as tho I ever could; how can I learn to love him?” Thus writes an inquiring soul. The only answer is, Get acquainted with God. The trouble with our friend is a lack of acquaintance with God; for “he that loveth not knoweth not God.” *1 John 4:18*. “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.” *Psalms 9:10. SITI October 28, 1897, page 2.1*

Don't trouble yourself about “trying to love God.” Love doesn't come in that way. Love is a spontaneous growth springing from acquaintance with one who is loving and lovable. Get acquainted with God, and you can't help loving him. The god whom you are *trying to love*, is not the true God. *SITI October 28, 1897, page 2.2*

“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (*Romans 5:5*), and we are taught (*Luke 11:13*) that God is more ready to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than a parent is to give good things to his children. The Spirit has, indeed, been poured out upon all flesh (*Acts 2:16, 17*), so the gift of love has been bestowed upon us even before we ask it. Air and water, the first essentials to life, and the freest of the gifts of God, are the best representations of the measureless gift of the Spirit, and so of the infinity of God's gift of everlasting love. *SITI October 28, 1897, page 2.3*

“But how can I get acquainted with God?” O, that is not difficult! He is “not far from every one of us” (*Acts 17:27*), and is very accessible, for he invites everybody to come to him. Through Christ all men, of every class and nation, “have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” *Ephesians 2:18*. Begin to hold conversations with him. Do not be afraid of intruding, or of putting yourself forward; for when you speak to the Lord, you are only replying to the words that he has already spoken to you. If you consider what he has said to you, you will be at no loss to know what to say to him. You can not

expect to love one with whom you are not acquainted; but what is more natural than the growth of love between persons who frequently converse together?*SITI October 28, 1897, page 2.4*

We get acquainted with God also through his works. "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." *Psalms 33:5*. All his works praise him. The evidences of his love and loveliness are stamped upon every leaf and flower; they descend with the rain, and flow with the streams; they shine in the sunbeams, and are diffused in the air. "O, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him;" for unto you who believe "he is precious." E. J. W.*SITI October 28, 1897, page 3.1*

November 4, 1897

“Editorial. Acceptance with God” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

Acceptance with God. —Many people hesitate to make a start to serve the Lord, because they fear that God will not accept them; and thousands who have been professed followers of Christ for years are still doubting their acceptance with God. For the benefit of such I write, and I would not bewilder their minds with speculations, but will endeavor to give them the simple assurance of God’s Word.*SITI November 4, 1897, page 1.1*

A Purchased Possession.— “Will the Lord receive me?” I reply by another question, Will a man receive that which he has bought? If you go to the store and make a purchase, will you receive the goods when they are delivered? Of course you will; there is no room for any question about it. The fact that you bought the goods, and paid your money for them, is sufficient proof, not only that you are *willing*, but that you are *anxious*, to receive them. If you did not want them, you would not have bought them. Moreover, the more you paid for them the more anxious you are to receive them. If the price that you paid was great, and you have almost given your life to earn it, then there can be no question but that you will accept the purchase when it is delivered. Your great anxiety is lest there should be some failure to deliver it.*SITI November 4, 1897, page 1.2*

Now let us apply this simple, natural illustration to the case of the sinner coming to Christ. In the first place, he has bought us. “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price.” *1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. SITI November 4, 1897, page 1.3*

The price that was paid for us was his own blood-his life. Paul said to the elders of Ephesus: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with

his own blood." *Acts 20:28*. "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation [manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers' but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." *1 Peter 1:18, 19*. He "gave himself for us." *Titus 2:14*. He "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." *Galatians 1:4*. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 1.4*

He bought not a certain class, but the whole world of sinners. "For God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only-begotten Son." *John 3:16*. Jesus said, "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." *John 6:51*. "For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." *Romans 5:6, 8*. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 1.5*

The price paid was infinite, therefore we know that he very much desired that which he bought. He had his heart set on obtaining it. He could not be satisfied without it. See *Philippians 2:6-8*; *Hebrews 12:2*; *Isaiah 53:11*. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 1.6*

It Was His Bargain.— "But I am not worthy." That means that you are not worth the price paid, and therefore you fear to come lest Christ will repudiate the purchase. Now you might have some fear on that score if the bargain were not sealed, and the price were not already paid. If he should refuse to accept you, on the ground that you are not worth the price, he would not only lose you, but also the amount paid. Even tho the goods for which you have paid are not worth what you gave for them, you yourself would not be so foolish as to throw them away. You would rather get some return for your money than get nothing. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 1.7*

But further, you have nothing to do with the question of worth. When Christ was on earth in the interest of the purchase, he "needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man." *John 2:25*. He made the purchase with his eyes open, and he knew the exact value of that which he bought. He is not at all disappointed when you come to him and he finds that you are worthless. You have not to worry over the question of worth; if he,

with his perfect knowledge of the case, was satisfied to make the bargain, you should be the last one to complain. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.1*

For, most wonderful truth of all, he bought you for the very reason that you were not worthy. His practiced eye saw in you great possibilities, and he bought you, not for what you were then or are now worth, but for what he could make of you. He says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." *Isaiah 43:25*. We have no righteousness, therefore he bought us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Says Paul: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power." *Colossians 2:9, 10. SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.2*

How Christ Gets Glory.— Here is the whole process:—*SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.3*

"We all... were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." *Ephesians 2:3-10. SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.4*

We are to be "to the praise of the glory of his grace." This we could not be if we were originally worth all he paid for us. There would in that case be no glory to him in the transaction. He could not, in the ages to come, show in us the riches of his grace. But when he takes us, worth nothing, and at the last presents us faultless before the throne, it will be to his everlasting glory. And then there will not be any to ascribe worthiness to themselves. Throughout eternity, the sanctified hosts will unite in saying to Christ: "Thou art worthy; ... for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out

of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.” “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” *Revelation 5:9, 10, 12.* *SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.5*

The Doubting “But.”—Surely all doubt as to acceptance with God ought to be set at rest. But it is not. The evil heart of unbelief still suggests doubts. “I believe all this, but—.” There, stop right there; if you believed you wouldn’t say “but.” When people add “but” to the statement that they believe, they really mean, “I believe, but I don’t believe.” But you continued: “Perhaps you are right, but hear me out. What I was going to say is, I believe the Scripture statements that you have quoted, but the Bible says that if we are children of God we shall have the witness of the Spirit, and will have the witness in ourselves; and I don’t feel any such witness, therefore I *can’t* believe that I am Christ’s. I believe his Word, but I haven’t the witness.” I understand your difficulty; let me see if it can not be removed. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.6*

As to your being Christ’s, you yourself can settle that. You have seen what he gave for you. Now the question is, Have you delivered yourself to him? If you have, you may be sure that he has accepted you. If you are not his, it is solely because you have refused to deliver to him that which he has bought. You are defrauding him. He says, “All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” *Romans 10:21.* He begs you to give him that which he has bought and paid for, yet you refuse, and charge him with not being willing to receive you. But if from the heart you have yielded yourself to him to be his child, you may be assured that he has received you. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.7*

In His Word.— Now as to your believing his words, yet doubting if he accepts you, because you don’t feel the witness in your heart, I still insist that you don’t believe. If you did, you would have the witness. Listen to his Word: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, I because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.” *1 John 5:10.* To believe in the Son is simply to believe his

Word and the record concerning him. And “*he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*” You can’t have the witness until you believe; and as soon as you do believe, you have the witness. How is that?—Because *your belief in God’s Word is the witness*. God says so: “Now *faith is the substance* of things hoped for, *the evidence* of things not seen.” *Hebrews 11:1*. If you should hear God say with an audible voice that you are his child, you would consider that sufficient witness. Well, when God speaks in his Word, it is the same as tho he spoke with an audible voice; and your faith is the evidence that you hear and believe. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” *Romans 8:16*. How is the witness given?—By the Word. There the witness is written, and the Holy Spirit brings to our remembrance the words recorded. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.8*

Go On unto Perfection. —This assurance does not warrant us in relaxing our diligence and settling down contentedly, as tho we had gained perfection. We must remember that Christ accepts us not for our sake, but for his own sake; not because we are perfect, but that in him we may go on unto perfection. He blesses us, not because we have been so good that we have deserved a blessing, but in order that in the strength of the blessing we may turn away from our iniquities. *Acts 3:26*. To every one that believes in Christ, the power-right or privilege-is given to become the sons of God. *John 1:12*, margin. It is by the “exceeding great and precious promises” of God through Christ that we are “made partakers of the divine nature.” *2 Peter 1:4*. E. J. W. *SITI November 4, 1897, page 2.9*

November 18, 1897

“Unlettered Learning” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

“And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” *John 7:15.SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.1*

The Greek word here rendered “letters” is the word meaning *writings* or *Scriptures*. A learned man, one well acquainted with books, is commonly called “a man of letters,” or a literary man. Now there are many books, but only one that is so prominent as to be sufficiently designated by the term “the Book,” and that is the Bible; for the word “*Bible*” means simply *book*. So “the writings,” when used in the Bible without qualification, mean the sacred writings, or the Scriptures. The text above quoted should therefore be rendered, as it is in some versions, “How does this man know the Scriptures, never having learned?” *SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.2*

Like John the Baptist, Jesus never studied in the Jewish schools. John “was in the deserts till the day of is showing unto Israel.” *Luke 1:80*. So Jesus dwelt at Nazareth, subject to his parents, a humble carpenter, until he came prominently before the people at his baptism. Yet no two teachers ever aroused greater interest among the people, or attracted more attention. People flocked to hear them, and hung on their words. The officers of the law said of Jesus, “Never make spake like this man,” and the people were astonished at his teaching; “for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” *SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.3*

That Jesus had not studied in the schools of the doctors of the law, —the theological seminaries of that time,—is shown by the questions which the priests and elders put to him as he was teaching in the temple, “By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority?” *Matthew 21:23*. Yet he had wisdom, both in asking and in answering questions, that put to

silence all the learned doctors, while his teaching was so simple that “the common people heard him gladly,” because they could understand him; and the ability to put deep things into simple, easily understood language is the mark of the greatest wisdom.*SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.4*

How did Jesus get this wonderful knowledge?—From the Word of God. All Jewish children were taught the Book of the Law, according to the command of the Lord by Moses: “These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” *Deuteronomy 6:6, 7*. Many parents of course did this carelessly, and, especially in later times, mingled with their instruction many idle traditions learned from the doctors; but those children who had faithful parents knew the Holy Scriptures from childhood. With the child Jesus this was no routine task, for he says, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” *Psalms 40:8*. The Holy Scriptures, studied in the humble house in Nazareth, and opened to his understanding by the Spirit of God, were the beginning and the sum of all the wisdom that Jesus had.*SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.5*

As with Jesus himself, so with those whom he chose to accompany him, and to send forth to preach,—they were men in humble station, not having studied in the theological schools. Their learning was derived from the Scriptures.*SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.6*

The rulers were astonished at the power and knowledge of these humble fishermen preachers, as they had been with Jesus. We are told that when the rulers “saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” *Acts 4:13*. The word “ignorant” is unfortunate, as applied to the apostles. “Unlearned” they certainly were, according to the fine standards of the schools; but they were not ignorant. Why then do we have such a statement in the sacred record?—In reality we do not, and the occurrence of the word in our English version is an interesting illustration of the very point we are

studying. Thus:—*SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.7*

The two words “ignorant men,” in *Acts 4:13*, are from one Greek word, *idiotai*, the plural of *idiots*. The reader will at once recognize in this our common word “idiot,” and will at once conclude that the English rendering is much more mild than the Greek text. But wait a moment. The primary and ordinary meaning of this Greek word is, “a *private person*,” one of the common people. But as certain public teachers began to style themselves philosophers, and to claim for themselves a monopoly of wisdom, so that a man must have a recommendation from them—a certificate that he had “been through” the prescribed course—before he could have any standing as a scholar, it came about that all who had not such public recognition were considered ignorant. The fact that our translators adopted this secondary use of the Greek word instead of its real meaning, shows how much they were under the influence of the same spirit. The Danish and Norwegian versions have “laymen” in the place of “ignorant men,” and the German has “men of inferior condition.” *SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.8*

Here is encouragement, and a lesson. The encouragement is that people in the most humble and despised walks of life may, by devoted study of the Word from a sincere desire that will astonish even the worldly-wise. *Deuteronomy 4:5, 6*. See also *Proverbs 2:1-9*. *SITI November 18, 1897, page 2.9*

The lesson is that in the church of Christ, there are no ranks and degrees—no class distinctions. The church, following in the steps of the schoolmen of heathen times, have made two classes,—clergy and laity,—that is the special, elect class, who have the keys of knowledge, and *the people*, who are to take what the clergy are pleased to dole out to them. But the Scriptures teach us that all in the primitive, true church were *laymen*, that is, they were simple, ordinary people, whose only distinction from others was that which the Holy Spirit gave them. Jesus, himself an ordinary laborer, chose fishermen and sent them forth to preach, and because they were thus sent forth they are called *apostles*. But they were *laymen*, and such they would be called to-day, if they were alive and in England or America. That those who teach the Word should form a special class, distinguished from other people by title, dress, etc., was not

only not contemplated by the Lord, but was directly opposed.*SITI*
November 18, 1897, page 2.10

It is true that “there are diversities of gifts,” and all men have not the same work, yet all in the church are brethren, and the greatest among them is he who does the most service. Let, therefore, no one be puffed up in his own mind with the thought that as a preacher he is above others in the church, and let no one be discouraged because his state is lowly. It was Tyndale’s declaration that he would “make the boy that drives the plow in England to know more of the Scriptures than the pope does.” That possibility is now before every plowboy, and he who truly improves it, although his name be unknown outside of his neighborhood, has a place in the church infinitely higher than that of pope. E. J. W.*SITI*
November 18, 1897, page 3.1

November 25, 1897

“Editorial. The Voice of the Deep” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

The Voice of the Deep.— It is impossible that any one who is acquainted to any degree with the Lord should stand by the sea without being reminded of the mighty power of the Creator. Yet many gaze upon the sea day after day with never a thought of its Maker, and even openly defy him. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 721.1*

God's Power. —To such the Lord says: “Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: Fear ye not me? saith the Lord; will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?” *Jeremiah 5:21, 22. SITI November 25, 1897, page 721.2*

His Faithfulness. —But it is not in order to produce fright that the Lord reminds us of his mighty power, that can set bounds for the sea, so that it can not pass over in its fiercest tumult. No; it is that we may trust him. Perfect faith and love drive fear away. So the power of God over the sea is referred to as evidence of his faithfulness. “O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.” *Psalms 89:8, 9. SITI November 25, 1897, page 721.3*

An example of this faithfulness is given in the description of the storm at sea, when the terrified disciples awakened Jesus and he “rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still.... And there was a great calm.” This was but the manifestation of the original creative power. He who created the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, retains full control over all. In those words, “Peace, be still,” we hear the same voice that said, “Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place.” And

this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached to us; so we are to learn from God's power over the sea, which is his because he made it, his power over the waves of strife that surge through human hearts.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 721.4*

Peace in the Heart. —For the angry sea represents the wicked. “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it can not rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” Christ is our peace. The word which he spoke to the Sea of Galilee that night is the word which he speaks to us. “I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly.” Surely here is comfort for those who have long struggled in vain with fierce passions.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 721.5*

Saving Forever. —Not only is God's power over the sea a symbol of his power to save men from the tide of sin, but it is also a pledge and surety of their final complete deliverance. It also shows the power with which God is going to clothe the preaching of the Gospel message in the last struggle preceding his second coming. Read the soul-thrilling words of *Isaiah 51:9-16*. E. J. W.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 721.6*

**“The Great Three-fold Message. God's Remedy for the Ills of Christendom”
The Signs of the Times, 23, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is a sad yet well-known fact that the professed Christian churches are terribly backslidden from God. This no earnest, observant Christian will deny. One testimony on this point will suffice. It is from Dr. Moore, editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* (Methodist Episcopal), of Cincinnati, Ohio, and appeared in that paper in its issue of May 19, 1893. It is headed, “To the Church of Methodists Write.” We can not quote it entire. That which we do not quote is as striking and pointed as that which we do quote. We also apprehend that the Methodist Church will average fairly with the other great Protestant denominations. Dr. Moore says:—*SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.1*

The class-books are filled with names of unconverted men and women. Official members may be found in box, dress circle, and parquet of opera and theater. Communicants take in the races, and give and attend card parties and dances. The distinction between inside and outside is so obscure that men smile when asked to unite with the church, and sometimes tell us that they find the best men outside.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.2*

When we go to the masses, it is too often with such ostentatious condescension that self-respect drives them from us.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.3*

And yet we have so spread out, under the inflation of the rich and ungodly, that they are a necessity to us. The enforcement of the unmistakable letter of the discipline for a single year would cut our membership in half, bankrupt our missionary society, close our fashionable churches, paralyze our connectional interests, and leave our pastors and bishops unpaid and in distress. But the fact remains that one of two things must happen,—the discipline must purge the church, or God’s Holy Spirit will seek other organized agencies. The ax is laid at the root of the tree. The call is to repentance. God’s work must be done. If we are in the way, he will remove us.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.4*

Division—Confusion—Unbelief

It is a sad and undeniable fact that the great numerous Christian church is hopelessly divided. Human federations may in a way bring them together, but human federation is not divine union. Human compacts or agreements are not bonds of divine life. All that the human can do is to confederate around a human standard called a creed. But God’s method is to unite all in one by the divine indwelling life. Jesus thus expresses it: “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” *John 17:23*. Consideration about a human creed is but the worship of an image on paper. Union in and by and through Jesus Christ is the worship and power of the living God.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.5*

It is a sad and undeniable fact that the many divisions in the great professed church and in the several churches are a stumbling-block

to worldlings and unbelievers. It is seeking unholy justification for an abnormal condition to say that all this division is unity in diversity, and all are well-organized parts of one great army under the One Leader, when the greater part of the vital strength of the church is absorbed in the very churches themselves, which, instead of growing better, are growing worse, and, instead of being the pastor's force to second him in aggressive work, are his field of labor. Jesus Christ said that union, not division, was an evidence of his divine mission. Hear him pray: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." *John 17:21*. Neither is this union to exist in mere sentiment, but in teaching, in doctrine, in purpose. Thus the Spirit speaks through Paul: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all *speake the same thing*, and that there be *no divisions* among you; but that ye be *perfectly joined together* in the *same mind* and in the *same judgment*." *1 Corinthians 1:10*. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.6*

It need scarcely be said that the only mind which will thus unite mortal man, with all their limitations of early environment, education, habits, prejudices, and sins, is the mind of Christ. Therefore "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." *Philippians 2:5*. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.7*

A Whole Christ

To thus be united to Christ and by the means of Christ's life to each other, means to accept Christ in the fullest sense. To accept Christ as *a Saviour, a redeemer, a way of life, an example, or a teacher*, will not suffice. He declares, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." *John 14:6*. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.8*

To accept Jesus Christ as *the Way* is to give up all our ways and yield all, willingly (for he will never compel), to his way. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh [renounceth] not all that he hath, he can not be my disciple." *Luke 14:33*. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.9*

To accept Jesus Christ as *the* Truth, means to accept the Word of God, as God's message through Christ to this world. For Christ is the Word, the one through whom all the Word was given. *John 1:1-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6*. It was his power that created all things; it was his Spirit which spake through the prophets. *Colossians 1:16; 1 Peter 1:10, 11*. He it is who has in all times and ages declared the Father to the children of men, whether as the Angel of the Covenant, the Pillar of Cloud and Fire, the exhaustless Rock-fountain in the desert, the Man Christ Jesus in Judea, the Inspirer of the Holy Writings, or the Sender of the Comforter, his representative. The Holy Word, with its one law and one Gospel, its one Spirit and one object, is the message of God through Jesus Christ to the sons of men. So Christ prays of those whom he would make one, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth;" for by that Word was he sanctified, "that they also might be sanctified through the truth." *John 17:17-19. SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.10*

He therefore who receives Christ, the Truth, will receive his Word in law and Gospel, in precept and promise, with all the heart. No tradition will make void in his heart the commandments of God to render vain his worship. *Matthew 15:6, 9*. No sophistry of man will be allowed to nail upon the cold, dead, irresponsive arms of a cruel creed the life-giving truths of that Word. He who truly accepts Christ will take the Word of Christ into his heart, and there let its vital principles live and grow, fashioning him day by day like the Master. That Word will be the Christ revealed in writing. And Christ will be that Word revealed in character. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.11*

He who receives Jesus Christ as the Life will not cut off the life which is in Him by the old serpent fable of Eden, "Thou shalt not surely die." In the light of God's presence in his Word the humble soul will acknowledge his sinfulness, and thereby his mortality, and look to Jesus Christ alone as the Source of righteousness and eternal life to the believer now, the Bestower of immortality at his coming. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.12*

This acceptance of Christ does not mean that all Christ's fullness must be seen and realized if we are to become one in him; for that

can never be, because he is infinite. But it does mean that the believer is to accept Jesus Christ as he is, as he is revealed in his Word. He must allow no civil magistrate, no mitred priest, no human creed or council, no worldly ambition, no arts of the evil one, to come between his soul and Jesus Christ, and he will leave to prayer, study, experience, and the goodness and wisdom of Christ, to supply the fuller knowledge. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.13*

Thus accepting Jesus Christ made the early apostolic church what it was, united in heart and purpose, in word and doctrine, in worship, in life. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship;" "and the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; ... and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." Thus it was in that early church. How precious to them were the truths and hopes of the resurrection, the second coming of Christ, the atonement in its fullest and strongest sense, the power of the simple Word and Holy Spirit of God in those days! Now these very doctrines are scoffed at and ridiculed and "spirited" away by those high in church councils, with but little or no protest from pulpit or press. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.14*

God's Plan Ever the Same

And God's plan for saving men has ever been the same. With him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Human nature has always been the same, and the Gospel of God's grace has ever been effectual to save. Types and symbols and shadows have changed, but the holy law and the divine Saviour have remained the same. "I am the Lord, I change not." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.15*

Confusion—Babylon

Departing from God's way, erecting human standards, following man's way instead of God's way, adding to his Word, subtracting from it, have always brought division and hence confusion. The

would-be wise men of the land of Shinar, promised themselves a better way when *they* built *themselves* a city and a tower, and sought to make *themselves* a name. They prized their work so highly that they called it, according to the story of their brick books, “Bab-il,” “the gate of God,” or “the gate of heaven;” but God could not serve with their sins. He will not give his glory to another, and he named it what it literally was, Babel, confusion. See *Genesis 11:1-9*. And so every attempt to improve upon God’s work has resulted in confusion in the work of God, of which confusion “God is not the author.” *1 Corinthians 14:33*. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 722.16*

Modern Babylon

It was confusion, Babylon, which came into the Christian church even before the death of the apostles, till finally, a few centuries after, the great apocalyptic harlot was developed. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.1*

The Reformers took some mighty strides toward the one standard of God, albeit in different companies, but they still stopped in Babylon, and confusion reigns even to the present. As truly as the great apostate system of the Papacy became Babylon by departing from the truth of God, so truly did Protestantism in the formulation of a multitude of creeds. Not only was confusion brought into the church, but the people of the world seeking for light are confused and driven to unbelief. Just as surely as papal Babylon committed fornication by forsaking her lawful Spouse, Jesus Christ, and uniting with the civil power, just so surely have those Protestant churches committed fornication with the kings of the earth which have done the same thing. And those who have not yet done this, but who are clamoring for civil power to enforce unscriptural dogmas or institutions (Scriptural would be no different), are trimming their ways for unlawful lovers of spiritual fornication. And is not this the condition of the Protestant churches to-day? Said the Rev. Charles Beecher, in a sermon at the dedication of the Second Presbyterian Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., Feb. 22, 1846:—*SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.2*

Thus are the ministry of the evangelical Protestant denominations

not only formed all the way up under a tremendous pressure of merely human fear, but they live, and move, and breathe in a state of things radically corrupt, and appealing every hour to every baser element of their nature to hush up the truth and bow the knee to the power of apostasy. Was not this the way things went with Rome? Are we not living her life over again? And what do we see just ahead?—Another general council? A world's convention! Evangelical Alliance and Universal Creed!*SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.3*

Since 1846 matters have not grown better, but rather worse.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.4*

God's Remedy

Here is God's remedy for this confusion among his people; for he certainly so counted them, and sent his message to heal them: —*SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.5*

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; *for the hour of his judgment is come*; and worship him *that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*” *Revelation 14:6, 7. SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.6*

The time when this message is due to the church and the world is when the judgment of God is impending. In past centuries we are told of a “judgment to come,” of a day when God *will* judge the world (*Acts 17:31; 24:25*), but in this message the judgment of God is come; it is already here. It is the adjudication of cases in the heavenly courts, *the accounting worthy* of those who have been faithful, and who will be raised to immortality at Christ's coming to give reward. (See *Luke 20:35; 1 Corinthians 15:52; Revelation 22:11, 12.*)*SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.7*

“*Fear God,*” says the divine message, “and give glory to *him.*” It implies that the church has given glory to men. Tradition has made void the commandments of God. Cold, dead creeds have displaced

the living Word. Elaborate ritual has dispossessed simple worship. The pagan solar holiday is accepted as the Lord's holy day in the place of the Sabbath of the Lord, one memorial of Him who created the heavens and the earth. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments." *SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.8*

Reverence of God leads to obedience. "Worship *him*." Turn from the worship of the false to the true. The highest worship is obedience, or service. "Thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou *serve*," are the words which Christ made his own, and which God would have the church make her own, and so return from Babylon, confusion, to Jerusalem, unity and peace. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.9*

As the everlasting Gospel brought union in the early church, which came from Pharisee, and Sadducee, and Essene, and publican, so if it had been received when first proclaimed in 1840, and onwards, it would have brought into one all the churches of modern Babylon. God did not condemn them for being in Babylon. He desired to call them out. "We would have healed Babylon," is what God said, but the sad result is "she is not healed." *Jeremiah 51:9*. And so has it been. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.10*

Babylon Is Fallen

The churches are worse to-day than when Charles Beecher, and many others, uttered their faithful warnings. Since that time the church has turned wonderfully to the world. She is organizing herself into societies, law and order leagues, unions, and civic federations, for the purpose of enforcing civil law, while the Gospel is scarcely heard by the poorer strata of society. More and more is the church leaving Christ and uniting with the world and the State. She is leaving the living spring and cold snow of Lebanon for human, broken cisterns. She has forsaken her Husband, Christ Jesus, and is committing fornication with the kings of earth. And so the angel sorrowfully declares:—*SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.11*

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is

fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." *Revelation 14:8.SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.12*

And it could not be otherwise. When the Jewish Church turned from the close, yet healing message of John and Jesus, a message which, if received, would have restored, they were ready to reject Christ, their King, and to say, "We have no king but Cæsar." And so when the modern church rejects God's healing message of reproof and warning, she will turn to the world and the State, and, under the guise of "Christian Citizenship," "Patriotism," or "Americanism," will denounce as traitors those who reveal by the Word of God the true nature of the Church-and-State dogmas, the children of fornication.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.13*

The Last Solemn Protest

What is the church now doing in the direction of the last apostasy?—She is centering her efforts and gathering her forces around the Sunday standard. And what is Sunday?—An institution which as a religious holiday is wholly pagan in origin, which as a weekly worship day is wholly papal, and for which there is no authority save the papal church and tradition. It is a usurper. Its very genius and character arouse a spirit opposed to the Gospel. It has been connected with apostasy and persecution in all ages. It was the mark of apostasy in heathendom; Rome claims it as the mark of her authority, and many of the Protestant churches, as organizations, are conceding Rome's claim by upholding in the face of law that foster child of the Papacy, and by endeavoring to secure the aid of the Papacy to claim the help of the civil power to enforce the counterfeit as the very test of God and mark of patriotism. Nevertheless it is, in howsoever shining garments dressed, the mark of the beast, opposed to the Sabbath of the Lord, the sign of God's power to create and sanctify and deliver. *Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:15.SITI November 25, 1897, page 723.14*

But, thank God, there are may yet in all these organizations who cleave to the Gospel, who believe in Gospel methods and Gospel means for reforming the world. While mistakingly holding Sunday,

they believe in no power save the Spirit to impress hearts, no means save the Word to enforce its claims upon men. These stay the tide, as it were, but do not change the current.*SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.1*

Against this course of Church uniting with the State the Lord offers to each soul the following fearful warning:—*SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.2*

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” *Revelation 14:9-11.SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.3*

A United Church Once More

Who will heed the Word of God? Some will. The first message, the healing message, sums up all positive truth of that Word. The second message simply announces the law suit upon the various organizations composing Babylon of rejecting the first. The third brings to each individual soul the message of warning to turn from “the beast” (the great system of Papal Church and State union), from “the image” (the reproduction of that system by Protestant Church and State union), from “the mark” (“the wild solar holiday of all pagan times,” the rival of the Sabbath of the Lord). But out of all these organizations, out of the world, from among the lowest slaves of Satan, from every land and clime, is gathering a company washed by the blood of the Lamb through faith, loyal to God and his law. Thus continues and declares the prophet: “Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” *Revelation 14:12.SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.4*

They keep therefore *all* the commandments. It could not be said

that he who was breaking the first or eighth commandment was a commandment-keeper. Neither could it be so said of him who violates the fourth precept. Of those who endured the persecution of the Dark Ages, not having all the light, it was said, “Here is the *patience* and the *faith* of the saints.” *Revelation 13:10*. They had patience; they possessed faith. But the class developed by this last threefold message of warning, have an additional characteristic—they “keep the commandments of God.” *SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.5*

And why not? How could they have an intelligent faith, the faith of Jesus, and do otherwise? His faith led him to keep all God’s commandments. It led his disciples, the early Christians, to follow in his steps. “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” *1 John 2:6*. Having the same Spirit, having the indwelling Christ, they will do the same works. He kept the seventh-day Sabbath; why should not his people? He knew it for what God designed it, the very rest of God from sin and self. The remnant church will thus know it. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.6*

Christ’s Coming

The next event in the great drama of the prophets is thus described: —*SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.7*

“And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.” *Revelation 14:14*. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.8*

It is Christ our Lord coming to reap earth’s harvest, which is rapidly ripening. The same sun which ripens the wheat for the garner, ripens the tares for the fire. The same truth which, received, develops character for the kingdom of God, rejected, develops character for destruction. O soul, accept of Jesus Christ as he is, as he desires to be to you, the Way, the Truth, and the Life! Accept of the everlasting Gospel, and be saved eternally in God’s own way. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.9*

One Sure Thing. —In the book of Proverbs much is said about surety, and people are more than once warned against going surety, not only for a stranger, but even for a friend. In the *eleventh chapter, verse 15*, we read, “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure.” In the margin we have in the place of “suretyship,” “those that strike hands.” That is a man can not be safe unless he refrains from giving his hand as surety for another. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.10*

But read further, and see what is said in the twenty-first verse: “*Tho* hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished, but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.” Notice that the words “*tho*” and “*join*” are in Italic type, indicating that they are not in the Hebrew. The literal Hebrew, as indicated in the margin of the Revised Version, is “hand in hand.” Here then, we find an instance of giving the hand, or, as rendered, “My hand upon it!” In two translations before me, I read, “One can give his hand for it, that the wicked shall not be unpunished; but the seed of the righteous shall escape.” So sure is it that God will see that justice has its due. Men are often tempted to think, as did David, that the wicked have the best of it, and that in unrighteousness is the most prosperity to be found; but let no one be deceived in this matter. So sure is it that wickedness will be punished, and that the reward of the righteous will not be forgotten, that one may safely give his hand upon it, and be a surety for it. It is the only sure thing in this world.” E. J. W. *SITI November 25, 1897, page 724.11*

December 9, 1897

“Greater Works than These” The Signs of the Times, 23, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” *John 14:12*. The first question that almost invariably arises whenever this is read, is, “What greater works can anybody possibly do than the Lord did?” or, “How can anybody do greater works than he did?” To this the hearer is obliged to answer, “I don’t know.” But the fact that we do not know, and can not form any conception of the thing, has no effect upon it. Jesus has said it in the most positive manner, and that is sufficient. *SITI December 9, 1897, page 754.1*

Let it be remembered that it is only those who *believe* that can do these great works; and certainly no one who is not able to do the works, can be expected to know anything about the matter. But the very asking of the questions, “What?” and “How?” implies more or less unbelief. The person may not realize it, but there is at least a shade of doubt underlying those questions; there is a trace of the notion that we will not believe what we can not understand. Now if there is unbelief even in the slightest degree, then it is certain that no works at all will be done; for “this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent.” *John 6:29*. But if there is unbelief, there can not possibly be belief. Therefore the one who questions this matter need not expect ever to know anything about it. *SITI December 9, 1897, page 754.2*

“But is it not unbelief that prompts my questioning,” some will say; “it is only a real desire to know what the works are, and how they are to be done.” In other words, it is curiosity. Well, of one thing we may be sure, and that is that whatever good works one has, come from God; for that which was true of Christ must most certainly be true of us, “I can of mine own self do nothing.” *John 5:30*. “The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” *John 14:10*. Since “it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (*Philippians 2:13*), it is not necessary for us to know *how*.

Our part is simply to yield ourselves as instruments of righteousness. The instrument does not need to know what the one who handles it is doing, nor how he is able to do it. Nay, the instrument *can not* know how, else he would no longer be the instrument. "Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?" *Psalm 106:2.SITI December 9, 1897, page 754.3*

Finally, is it useless to ask how we can do greater works than those which Christ did, for those who do them will be unconscious of them. When at the last day the Lord says to the faithful ones, "Come, ye blessed of my Father," and enumerates the good works that they have done, they will wonderingly ask, "Lord, when did we ever do these things?" They will have been so yielded to the Lord that his mighty power will have wrought them in the most natural and unobtrusive way, just as it does through the growing plant. It is well that we are thus ignorant. If it were possible that the mighty works of God could be wrought through self-conscious folks, it would be most uncomfortable for those who were obliged to live with them. If we thought that we were doing greater works than Christ did, we would become so conceited and overbearing that nobody could live with us. Let us be content, yea, we may even rejoice, that we are weak and ignorant, since our Father is almighty and all-wise, and he is ours. E. J. W.*SITI December 9, 1897, page 754.4*

December 16, 1897

“Editorial. The Lesson of History” *The Signs of the Times*, 23, 49.

E. J. Waggoner

We do not say “a lesson from history,” but “the lesson of history;” for there is but one great lesson that history teaches, yet it is one that is rarely learned. For want of learning this one lesson, thousands study history in vain; while he who learns the simple, fundamental lesson in the beginning of his study will read to profit. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 768.1*

The reason why the lesson referred to is so almost universally overlooked, is that the records that are usually studied are so crowded with details that the mind becomes confused; history becomes to the student only a mass of occurrences, in which the underlying truth taught by history is lost. This melancholy result would be avoided if people began at the right place to study, taking the simplest history first and afterwards that which is more complex. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.1*

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” and the Bible is the book that teaches the fear of the Lord; therefore it is in the Bible that the beginning of wisdom is found. It is the simplest book in the world, as would naturally be expected of a book of beginnings. That it is really a book very easy to be understood is proved by the fact that it teaches the way to the kingdom of heaven, which can be entered only by children and those who become like children. See *Matthew 18:3*. It is manifest, therefore, that the Bible can be understood by children, and consequently must be an easy book. It is the first book that children should study. But the whole of a thing is found in the beginning, just as the entire tree exists in the germ; and so the Bible, which teaches the fear of the Lord, contains the sum of knowledge, and may be studied by the gray-haired sage as profitably as by the little child. Its treasure of wisdom is inexhaustible. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.2*

Now for the first lesson in history. Very fittingly it begins with the beginning of time. We will quote a page from it, that we may clearly

see what is the simple, underlying truth taught by all history since the creation of the world. Here it is:—*SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.3*

“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth; and the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters; and all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos; and Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters; and all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died. And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan; and Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters; and all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.” *Genesis 5:1-11.SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.4*

Thus the record continues to the end of the chapter, of which we have quoted just one fourth; yet the chapter covers a period of more than fifteen hundred years.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.5*

What is the sum of history, as indicated by this record?—Simply this, that men lived a certain number of years, and then died. With this first historical record agree all that have been written since. The whole of history can be summed up in the words, They lived so long, and then they died. The one thing, therefore, that history teaches, is that a man’s life is but “a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” Yet this is the thing that is seldom thought of in reading history. Histories written by man are so filled up with accounts of the incidentals,—the things that people did, the battles fought, the kingdoms established, the cities built, and the “glory” gained,—that unless one has begun the historical study with the primary book, that is, the Bible, he will lose the main point.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.6*

Secular history alone is sufficient, if one reads it thoughtfully, to show that it is utterly impossible for man to inherit or possess this earth. "For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others." Notwithstanding this, "their inward thought is this their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honor abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings." *Psalm 49:10-13*. Each generation imagines that it is an exception, and that its works will stand forever. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.7*

Dull Students

People refuse to learn the lesson of history, even when it is spread out before their eyes. They contemplate the ruins of former greatness, and even while looking, think: "How superior we are to those who lived in ancient times! Their empires have all vanished, and their cities are in ruins, or utterly extinct." But that is most short-sighted reasoning. A man might as well claim to have more vitality than Methuselah, because he himself is living, in the possession of full strength, while Methuselah, forsooth, is long since dead! Ah, but wait, my friend, and time will tell a different story! You will not have to wait one-tenth the length of Methuselah's life, to learn your mistake. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.8*

So with the works of which men boast to-day. There are now no structures so massive and so strongly built as many of those of ancient days, that have been utterly demolished by time. Should time continue as much longer as it has already continued, nothing would remain of the glory of the nations that now inhabit the earth, and their names would be forgotten unless some new fragments of stone preserved them. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.9*

No; this earth is under a curse, and unsuited for man's dwelling-place. He can not live here. Do what he will to establish himself here, he is swept away before he can fairly get a foothold. The princes of the earth are brought to nothing, and the judges of the earth are as vanity. "Yea, scarce are they planted, scarce are they sown, scarce hath their stock taken root in the earth, when He

bloweth upon them, and they wither, and the whirlwind taketh them away as stubble. *Isaiah 40:24*, R.V., margin. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.10*

In spite of this truth which is the one thing that is most evident in all history, men go on planning for this earthly life as tho they were to abide here forever. We see them throwing all their energies into a political struggle, fiercely excited over the outcome, scrambling and crowding for a place, perfectly oblivious to the fact that even if they succeed in attaining the coveted object, it will disappear, and they themselves with it, almost as soon as they seize it. So it always has been, and so it will be to the end. They are as foolish as children on the beach, fighting over the sand houses they have built, which the next wave of the incoming tide will wash away, and at the same time overwhelm them. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.11*

What hope is there then for man?—Much, every way. Go back again to our elementary history book. Surely we can believe a record that is so conclusively substantiated by facts. That tells us that God created the earth not in vain, but to be inhabited (*Isaiah 43:18*), and that when he had completed it, with man upon it, he “saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” *Genesis 1:31*. The critical eye of the Master could detect no flaw, nothing that could be improved, either in man or his condition and circumstances. Everything was as good as God himself could make it. *SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.12*

Now we know that “whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever.” *Ecclesiastes 3:14*. Therefore the condition of the earth in the beginning, and of man as well, is that which is to be through all eternity. God did not place men on the earth in order that they should be swept away like gnats, but that they should possess it forever, even forever and ever. Therefore, “we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” *2 Peter 3:13*. Even tho there were not many repetitions of that promise, the fact that in the beginning God placed a perfect man in a perfect earth, is sufficient promise that so it will be. In view of this promise we can confidently say, even when about to be carried away by the flood of time, “God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me.” *Psalms*

49:15.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.13*

Who will begin to read history from the beginning, and learn the great lesson that it teaches? Who will cease to chase the bubble that collapses as it is grasped, and begin to plan and live as citizens of a better country, that is, an heavenly, whose capital is a city that has everlasting foundations, whose builder and maker is God? E. J. W.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 769.14*

“What War Is” The Signs of the Times, 23, 49.

E. J. Waggoner

It is a most singular thing, yet it is a fact, that the loudest calls for war that have been heard within the last two or three years, have come from the ministers of the Gospel. From thousands of pulpits appeals have been made for any or all of the Powers to proceed to annihilate the Turks, in the interest of the Armenians; later, the Cretans have been encouraged in their efforts to throw off Turkish rule, and Greece has been applauded for taking the part of Crete in order that she might get the whole; while many of the same preachers unsparingly berated the English Government for not joining the Greeks in their war with Turkey.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.1*

What a strange spectacle,—professed ministers of the Gospel of peace, to say nothing of thousands of church members, clamoring for war! Do they know what war is? Let us just take the barest glance at it, as it really is. One of the war correspondents with the Turkish army, in the course of his description of the battle of Mati, says:—*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.2*

The guns were already clouded in smoke and dust. Now and again a dot came traveling up toward us with painful slowness—a wounded artilleryman; now moaning convulsively; now silent, and swallowing an invisible lump, with twitching eyes.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.3*

Who cannot see the picture of the strong man striving to repress any expression of the pain that was nevertheless overmastering

him? Later on, the correspondent says:—*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.4*

The ambulance drove forward to pick up our wounded, and Edhem Pasha pushed on behind his victorious troops. I passed a Tutish soldier who lay with both legs broken, sobbing piteously with pain. And then I hated war.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.5*

And who would not? For war means those same scenes magnified, and multiplied a thousand times. It means men helpless and suffering with wounds, lying in some spot for hours and even days in the heat and cold, famishing for water. In short, it means wholesale murder, aggravated by the fact that many of the victims are not killed outright.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.6*

We are charitable enough to believe that most of this call for war, from the lips of professed Christians, would cease if those who do the calling could be placed for a season in the front ranks. Not that they are cowards, but that they do not stop to think what they are talking about. The fact is, that every man who shouts for war is simply an aider and abettor of murder. One famous general declared that “war is hell,” and it is fact that the spirit of war is the spirit of Satan. An officer in the Franco-Prussian war said that if he had led a regiment of angels into the battle they would have come back devils. How can Christians be in any way whatever accessories to such fiendish work?*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.7*

It is for the purpose of warning, not of condemning, that we write. We know that there are thousands of sincere Christians who “know not what manner of spirit they are of” when they call for war, to avenge wounded honor or even outrage, and some with whom we have talked have been shocked, on having their attention called to the matter, to find that they were unconsciously being inspired by the spirit of the devil, for it is the spirits of devils, that go about to stir up war. See *Revelation 16:14*. The man who shouts for and applauds murder is at heart a murderer. In this time when the nations are preparing war, “great plainness of speech” is necessary, in only that some at least may be awakened to their danger, and may for ever break loose from the fierce, murderous, Satanic spirit

that is benumbing the senses of the world's millions, and carrying them to everlasting destruction. E. J. W.*SITI December 16, 1897, page 771.8*

December 23, 1897

“Only as Shadow” The Signs of the Times, 23, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

Every shadow of darkness, every cloud of gloom, every fear of whatever kind, is simply the shadow of death, and of the devil. He has cast his hellish shadow over the world. Now, as Zacharias prophesied by the Holy Ghost at the birth of his son, the Lord has visited us and delivered us out of the hand of our enemies that we “might serve him without fear.” *SITI December 23, 1897, page 786.1*

He has delivered us from every tremor of fear, and hath sent the Dayspring from on high “to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.” If you have his life you have his light. What is there to be afraid of? To the one in Christ death itself is only a shadow. The sting is gone. Satan can cast the shadow over him, but there is nothing in a shadow to be afraid of. He is delivered from the power of darkness. He is going through an enemy’s land, whose weapons are all broken. He is going into a nest of scorpions, whose stings have been removed. He is going into a prison-house, the key of which is held by One who loves him. E. J. W. *SITI December 23, 1897, page 786.2*

“He Hath Blinded Their Eyes” The Signs of the Times, 23, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

“Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.” *John 11:39, 40. SITI December 23, 1897, page 786.3*

Many people are more inclined to find doubt and despair in the Bible, than to find hope and comfort, although the Bible contains none of the former, and is full of the latter; so when they read the words of the prophet Isaiah, they at once begin to complain against God, and to say that he is unjust and partial, and they will feel sure

that they can not believe, because God has made it impossible.*SITI December 23, 1897, page 786.4*

Now the Bible claims to be the Word of God. It exists for the sole purpose of revealing God to men, that they may see in him the One altogether worthy of worship and affection. Everybody knows that this is the object of the Bible, whether they believe what it says or not. That being the case, how can it be supposed that anything can be found in the Bible that would tend to depreciate God in the estimation of men? Considered from a human standpoint, and as a merely human production, no one would be so foolish as to write things derogatory to his hero, in a book published for the sole purpose of honoring him. We may therefore be sure that none of the men who had to do with the production of the Bible saw in such statements as the one first quoted anything except such goodness and mercy as is consistent with the character of an all-merciful God, a God who not only loves, but who *is love*.*SITI December 23, 1897, page 786.5*

That there is comfort in even such texts as that quoted from Isaiah, and that they were written for the sole purpose of producing hope and comfort, is proved by *Romans 15:4*: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." And that the words of the prophet Isaiah do not teach that there are some who can not be saved even tho they wish to, is shown by the inspired words of Peter, concerning Christ: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." *Acts 10:43*.*SITI December 23, 1897, page 786.6*

When we read that God has hardened the heart of any person, then we should read the story of Pharaoh. God hardened his heart; but every one who reads the account carefully, will see that it was only by the manifestation of kindness and mercy that he did it. When God sent judgments upon Pharaoh and his land, he humbled himself, and confessed his sin, promising repentance; but as soon as God showed him favor and prosperity came again, then his heart was hardened. It was because Pharaoh hated truth and righteousness that as soon as special mercy was manifested

toward him he took advantage of it to sin yet more, "Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." *Isaiah 26:10.SITI December 23, 1897, page 786.7*

Read the verses in connection with *John 12:39, 40*, together with the eleventh chapter, and you will see that the way the Lord blinded the eyes of the people was by sending great light to them, which was not according to their previous experience. Jesus declared himself to be the Light, and his mighty works had showed how great was the light. But the greater the work that he did, the more the people hated him and his teaching. Everybody knows the effect that great light has upon the eyes of those who are not accustomed to it; it blinds them, or causes them to close their eyes. The more they have accustomed themselves to live in the darkness, the more does the light blind them.*SITI December 23, 1897, page 787.1*

The Jews, like all the rest of the world, sat in darkness; but their blindness was even greater than that of the rest of mankind, because they had had great light; and everybody knows that the darkness is much more intense to one who goes out of the light into it, than to one who as always been in the dark. But while others came to the light that shone in the darkness when Jesus came, the Pharisees and the principal part of the Jews rejected him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." *John 1:11*. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." *John 3:20, 21*. The Jews had loved darkness, and persisted in walking in darkness so long that the light was much more blinding to them than the darkness itself.*SITI December 23, 1897, page 787.2*

The very same statement by the prophet Isaiah we find thus quoted in *Matthew 13:13-15*: "Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people's heart is

waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and *their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see* with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” The same spirit of truth prompted Matthew to make this quotation from Isaiah, that moved Isaiah to write the words in the first place; therefore we know that what we read in Matthew is the exact meaning of what we read in Isaiah. God blinded the eyes of men, only by sending them wonderful light. *SITI December 23, 1897, page 787.3*

Is it therefore God’s fault that they can not see?—Not by any means. How can it be? If men complain because God shows mercy, what would they say if he manifested wrath? If they reject the love and mercy of God, what can he do for them? Shall we complain of God for sending light that caused men to close their eyes? Shall we say that if he had not sent light, they would not have closed their eyes? Well, what then? Is it better to have one’s eyes open in the pitchy darkness, where there is not a ray of light, than to have them shut in the sunshine? The last condition of the man is just the same as the first, and his possibilities are infinitely greater; for nobody can possibly see in the darkness, but all can see in the light if they will accustom their eyes to it. Let us open our eyes, and praise the Lord for bringing us “out of darkness into his marvelous light.” E. J. W. *SITI December 23, 1897, page 787.4*

